

On Top Of The News

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Friday, May 29, 2009



**Price of a barrel  
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today:**  
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1.63**

**INSIDE TODAY  
WORLD NEWS**

**SETTLEMENT  
GROWTH**



Palestinians work at a construction site in the West Bank Jewish settlement of Maaleh Adumim, near Jerusalem, Thursday, May 28, 2009. Israel defied a surprisingly blunt U.S. demand that it freeze all building in West Bank Jewish settlements, saying Thursday it will press ahead with construction.

*See INTERNATIONAL NEWS*

**SPORTS NEWS**

**RED WINGS SOAR**



Detroit Red Wings Darren Helm, top, celebrates scoring the game-winning goal against the Chicago Blackhawks in overtime of Game 5 of the NHL hockey Western Conference finals in Detroit, Wednesday, May 27, 2009. Detroit won the game 2-1 and the series 4-1.

*See Sports Today*

*AHATA, together with Digicel, presents the 5th edition Shoco Awards*

## Excellence in tourism is given its just recognition

ORANJESTAD — The Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association (AHATA) is proud to announce the fifth edition of its Shoco Awards of Excellence, honoring individuals who represent the best in hospitality and its associated industries. The awards seek to recognize individual accomplishments in leadership, dedication and professionalism, which have led to exponential results. An industry-wide recognition will be given for Employee of the Year, Supervisor of the Year, Manager of the Year, Young Tourism Professional of the Year, Lifetime Achievement award and Tourism Pioneer.

*Continued on Next Page*



## Community Safety for the Youngest at ISA



WAYAKA - ISA students from the Montessori class and grades one and two had special opportunities to learn about fire prevention and community safety. Recent community field trips to the airport fire station and the Valero fire brigade provided hands on experiences for all.

The Montessori class accompanied by their teacher, Ms. McSwiggan visited the airport fire station. The children learned about the firefighters and what their lives were like, safety equipment they used and some basic skills necessary to prevent and fight fires when they occur.

*Continued on Page 10*



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# AHATA, together with Digicel, presents the 5th edition Shoco Awards



ensures standardization and objectivity, as well as transparency, in providing that the final honorees are among the "best of the best" in our industry.

The Shoco awards were first established in 2005 to recognize excellence and quality service in hospitality. Past winners of the awards were honored for their contributions to the industry and continue to serve as role models today.

The Shoco award first received its name by merit of it being something truly symbolic of Aruba. The Shoco owl is one of Aruba's natural treasures, indigenous to the island, and representing wisdom, resourcefulness, focus, vision and a keen sense of direction. The look of the Shoco award is unique, with renowned local

**Continued from Front Page**  
Application forms were recently sent to all AHATA-member resorts and companies, in initiating the first step of the selection process. AHATA members will allow the employees of their own organization to nominate who they believe merits recognition. The

chosen nominees will then be measured against set criteria, with documentation provided of what that nominee has accomplished on the job and in his/her community. An interview process will then go forward, with an independent jury in charge of the final selection. Each step of the process



artists Maritza Erasmus and Edwin Donata having created the design. AHATA, working with Aruba Learning, and teamed with signature alliance partner, Digicel, as the primary



# Kathy & Ron Curcuru honored at Casa del Mar Resort



ORANJESTAD - Recently at Casa del Mar vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years.

Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded

the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring was effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at Casa del Mar they call their home away from home. Kathy & Ron Curcuru were honored as distinguished visitors for the Island of Aruba. On picture Ricardo Croes from ATA together with Kathy & Ron and also Monique from Casa del Mar Resort. □

## Wayne & Joan Akeley honored at Playa Linda Resort



Recently at Playa Linda Resort vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at Playa Linda Resort they call their home away from home. Wayne & Joan Akeley were honored as Ambassadors of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 21 years.

Pictured Mr. Ricardo Croes together with Wayne & Joan also Mignon from the Playa Linda Resort. □



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# Varig to resume flights to Aruba from Brazil

ORANJESTAD - Aruba Airport Authority N.V. (AAA N.V.) has received notification that Varig will resume air service from Sao Paulo, Guarulhos International Airport with a stop over in Caracas to Aruba beginning July 5, 2009. The equipment used is a B737-800 aircraft with 177 seats and service will be on Sunday arriving from Caracas 17:40hrs and departing to Caracas 20:35hrs.

Varig has had twice weekly service on Mondays and Thursdays from Sao Paulo,

with a stop over in Caracas to Aruba from July 2004 to July 2006. Varig regrettably had to stop service due to the company's financial difficulties.

In March 2007, Gol purchased the bankrupt remains of Varig for US\$320 million from the Volo Group and Matlin Patterson Global opportunities hedge fund. GOL, one of Brazil's largest airlines and Latin America's largest low cost, low fare airline, offers nearly 800 daily flights to 49 destinations connecting the most important cities



in Brazil and ten major destinations in South America. The Company's service, which includes the GOL and VARIG brands, is

recognized as the best value proposition on the market. "Service from Brazil has been a priority for AAA (N.V.) and Aruba and we are delighted to have received an official Varig slot request, albeit for one weekly rotation only" said Peter Steinmetz, Managing Director AAA N.V. "Our main focus at present is maintaining air service to the destination, the

acquisition of new service is fantastic given the current state of the world economic and financial crisis. We will continue to work closely with our partners Aruba Tourism Authority and the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association in order to ensure the success of this weekly service and have this expand with additional frequencies in the future." □

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## Bijleveld cancels visit next week



THE HAGUE--Dutch State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten will not visit the Netherlands Antilles next week. Instead she will go to Curaçao late June.

Bijleveld-Schouten said she would not be able to make it next week due to the elections for a new European Parliament on June 4. As State Secretary of Home Affairs she is responsible for organising elections in the Netherlands.

"It is a quite a big deal to organise these elections which will take place with ballots and pencil," she told reporters Wednesday evening after a meeting with the Second Chamber. She said elections for a new European Parliament would also take place in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, which added an extra dimension.

Bijleveld-Schouten will be in Curaçao for the meeting of the Political Steering Group on June 25. Some media had reported late last week that the State Secretary would be in Curaçao later this week or early next week. □

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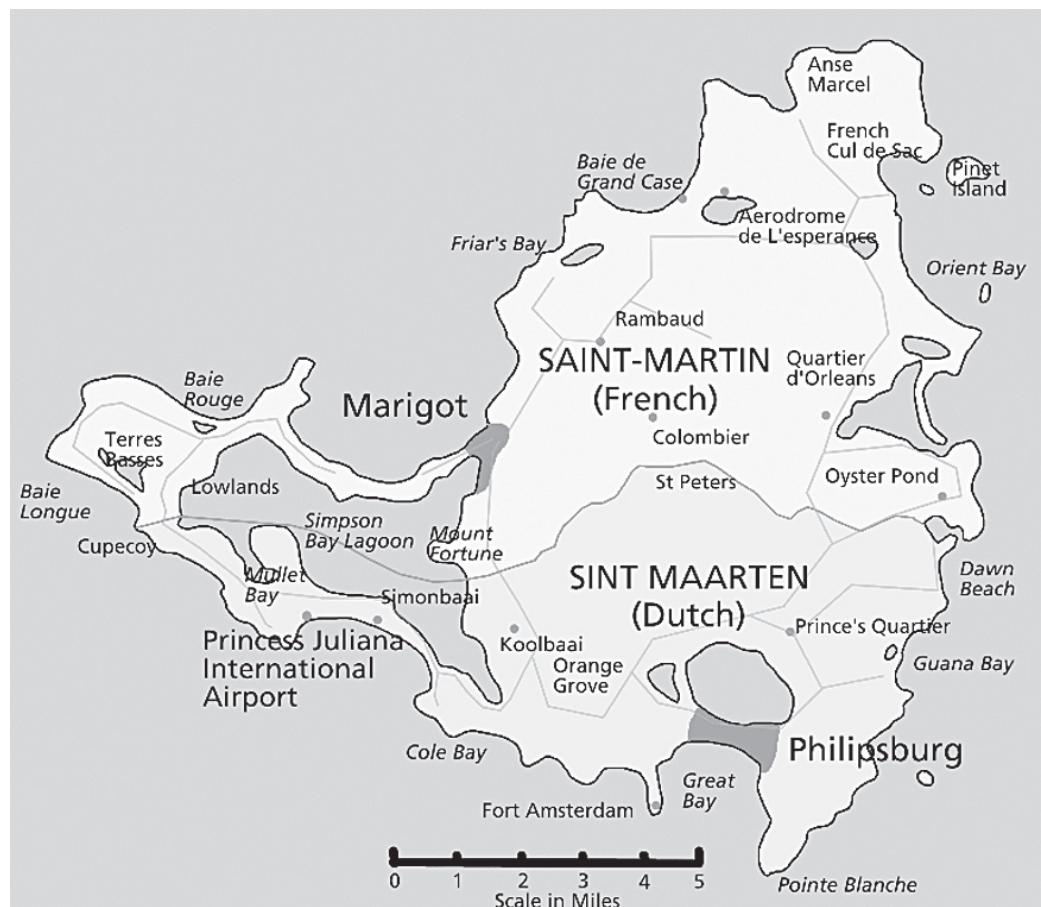
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## St. Maarten prosecutors await governor's signature for Registe's extradition



By Alan Riquelmy

Prosecutors on the Caribbean island of St. Maarten await the governor's signature on extradition papers for Michael Registe, and a potential injunction his attorney has threatened.

The Supreme Court of the Netherlands ruled Tuesday that the 26-year-old accused of the execution-style deaths of Randy Newton Jr., 21, and Bryan Kilgore, 20, can be extradited to Columbus. Taco Stein, lead prosecutor on the island, said the governor was currently off the island and wouldn't return until late this week. His signature could be penned early next week.

An injunction by Remco Stomp, Registe's attorney, asking a local judge to halt the extradition can't be filed until the governor signs his name, Stein said. Stomp

said Tuesday he intended to ask for the injunction.

"There's no new injunction," the prosecutor added.

Stomp has fought against his client's extradition since Registe was caught on the island in August. Accused of the July 20, 2007, deaths, Registe fled the country and was put on the FBI's top ten most wanted list. Stomp has said that Registe won't be treated fairly in Georgia because of his race.

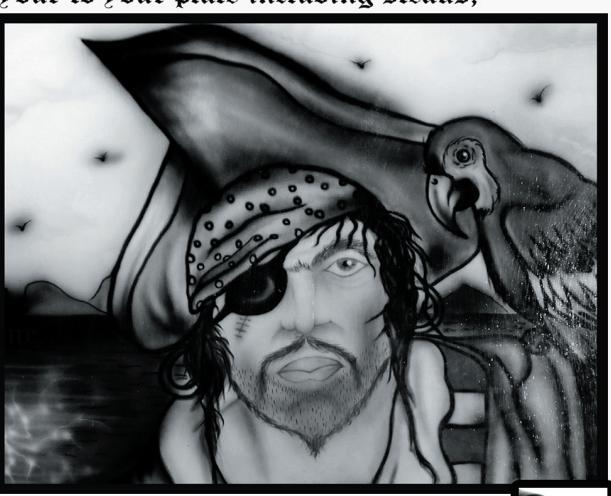
"Registe will not get a fair trial in Georgia as a black man suspected of killing two white college kids," Stomp said. "We will do everything possible to guarantee his human rights."

The former district attorney had to waive the death penalty as a prerequisite for extradition. Stomp said he doesn't believe the agreement would be upheld, and he wants a trial in the Netherlands Antilles. □

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# Caribbean tourism human resources conference opens in Curacao

WILLEMSTAD, Curacao - Tourism leaders across the region are being encouraged to value the importance of human resources in the sector. The subject of investment in human resources development was a key talking point at the opening of the 5th Annual Caribbean Tourism Human Resources Conference in Curacao on Wednesday. The Commissioner of Tourism for Curacao, Eugene Rhuggenath, told delegates that in order to remain competitive the tourism sector must invest heavily in staff training. "The principles of sustainable tourism development are applicable towards benefitting local communities and other stakeholders through training, education, participating in management; and for this to happen there needs to be extensive training of human resources at all levels," Rhuggenaath said. The Commissioner of Tourism estimated that by 2011 Curacao's hotel room stock would double from the current four thousand to over eight thousand. This, he said, would provide challenges for tourism leaders in the area of human resources. "In order to deliver the growth plans across the sectors and to focus on high quality tourism it is essential to develop the product not only by improving the physical tourism product but also the human resources component. In this the availability of appropriately trained manpower is crucial to success," he said. Meanwhile, the Executive Director of the Curacao Tourism Board and Director of Tourism Evita Nita also emphasized the importance of human resources training in the sector. She told conference participants this would lead to a more highly motivated workforce. "It is imperative for both our tourism workforce as well as our entire community to be motivated to deliver high level experience and service to our guests," the director of tourism said. "You should

see investment in our human resources not only as a means to achieve a better tourism sector but to reach a stage where our whole community is motivated to work towards a better island." The May 27 to 29 conference has as its theme, Best Practices for Creating a Motivated and Productive Tourism Workforce.

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO)'s Human Resources Director, Bonita Morgan said the theme was critical in these trying times for the tourism sector. "The theme becomes even more complex to address in this difficult economic environment where there are job layoffs and

contraction, high feelings of stress related to job security and even levels of distrust," Morgan said. "We have brought together a number of high quality speakers and presenters to share strategies, their experiences, best practices and case studies that can help us to address how

we can truly create a motivated and productive tourism workforce in our countries, our organisations and in the units and departments we work within." The conference is organised by the CTO in collaboration with the Curacao Tourism Board (CTB). □


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*At beachside reception at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino and Spa*

# Philadelphia Eagles Cheerleaders welcomed to Aruba



PALM BEACH - The island of Aruba has the unique pleasure to welcome 3 dozen or so of the most beautiful cheerleaders in the world. This

week, the Philadelphia Eagles Cheerleaders are not only enjoying the island of Aruba, but they are participating in photo shoots and creating next year's



swimsuit calendar.

On Wednesday evening, the Management and Staff welcomed the cheerleaders, their group leaders and



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the photographers to a sunset beach cocktail party and barefoot buffet dinner in the sand. Island VIP's joined in the welcome party celebration. □

*Photos by Julia Renfro*



# Community Safety for the Youngest at ISA



**Continued from Front Page**

The first and second grade classes along with their teachers Ms. Charles and Ms. Fredericks traveled to Valero to see and learn about the onsite fire brigade. The group had opportunities to see Valero emergency equipment including fire trucks, ambulances, pumper truck as well as all of their emergency gear. The children were enthralled as they sat in attentive silence while firefighters and paramedics explained the importance of safety and speed when responding to an emergency on site or sometimes in the community.

ISA is thankful for these experiences in the Aruban community. We want to thank the airport and Valero fire brigades for their time, patience and dedication to education of children and their commitment to serving the community. □



## Packing on too many pounds during pregnancy

By LAURAN NEERGAARD,  
AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON — Eating for two? New guidelines are setting how much weight women should gain during pregnancy—surprisingly little if they're already overweight. The most important message: Get to a healthy weight before you conceive, says the Institute of Medicine in the first national recommendations on pregnancy weight since 1990. It's healthiest for the mother — less chance of pregnancy-related high blood pressure or diabetes, or the need for a C-section — and it's best for the baby, too. Babies born to overweight mothers have a greater risk of premature birth or of later becoming overweight themselves, among other concerns.

Meeting the guidelines could be a tall order, considering that about 55 percent of women of childbearing age are overweight, that preconception care isn't that common and about half of pregnancies are unplanned.

Once a woman's pregnant, the guidelines issued Thursday aren't too different from what obstetricians already recommend, although about half of women don't follow that advice today.

Among the new recommendations:

A normal-weight woman, as measured by BMI or body mass index, should gain between 25 and 35 pounds during pregnancy. A normal BMI, a measure of weight for height, is between 18.5 and 24.9.

An overweight woman — BMI 25 to 29.9 — should gain 15 to 25 pounds during pregnancy.

For the first time, the guidelines set a standard for obese women — BMI of 30 or higher: 11 to 20 pounds.

An underweight woman — BMI less than 18.5 — should gain 28 to 40 pounds.

What if a mom-to-be has gained too much? On average, overweight and obese women already are gaining five more pounds than the upper limit. But pregnancy is not a time to lose weight, stressed guidelines co-author Dr. Anna Maria Siega-Riz of the

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

"It's not, 'Hey you gained enough, now you need to stop,'" Siega-Riz said. "Let's take stock of where you're at and start gaining correctly." Indeed, underweight and normal-weight mothers should put on a pound a week for proper fetal growth in the second and third trimesters, the guidelines say. The overweight and obese need about half a pound a week.

Hopping on the scale during prenatal checkups makes for a sensitive moment, especially in a culture that cherishes the stereotype of late-night ice cream-and-pickles snacks.

Implementing the guidelines may take a move "to change the whole culture about pregnancy" and eating, Siega-Riz said. She noted that in studies of the overweight, "most of these women will tell you that they've never been told how much weight to gain." The guidelines call for increased nutrition and exercise counseling during pregnancy, saying doctors or midwives may need to consult a dietitian to tailor a woman's care no matter her starting weight. Also, providers should discuss whether a woman plans to breastfeed, which not only is optimal for the baby but helps the new mother shed pounds, too.

"It's really a teachable moment," said guidelines co-author Dr. Patrick Catalano, obstetrics chairman at Ohio's Case Western Reserve University. "When women are pregnant, they may be more accepting" of weight discussions "because it's also in the best interest of their babies."

Obstetricians, who have struggled with how to advise heavier women as U.S. obesity rates have soared over the past two decades, welcomed the guidelines — especially the recognition that babies born too large tend to grow into overweight children at risk for their own health problems. Not too many years ago it was rare to see a 9-pound, or larger, newborn.

"Pregnant women should not be eating for two," said Dr. Ellen J. Landsberger,

who specializes in high-risk pregnancies at New York's Montefiore Medical Center. "You want a healthy baby? On both ends, you have to eat the right amount."

But is it realistic for obese women to gain as little as 11 pounds?

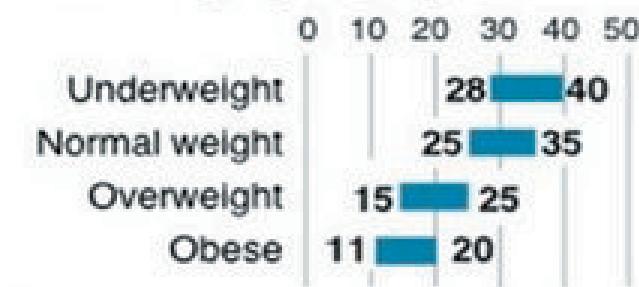
"We think it's possible. We also think it will be a challenge," said Cornell University nutrition specialist Dr. Kathleen Rasmussen, who chaired the Institute of Medicine committee.

In the Bronx, Nyree Paten illustrates that challenge: She had been putting on weight for three years and discovered she was pregnant at her peak, just over 300 pounds, seriously obese even for someone 6 feet tall. Her doctor diagnosed diabetes at her first prenatal checkup. □

## Weight ranges for pregnant women

It is recommended that normal-weight women should gain 25 to 35 pounds during pregnancy, according to the Institute of Medicine's guidelines.

### Recommendations for total weight gain, in pounds



SOURCE: Institute of Medicine

AP

Graphic shows recommendations for total weight gain during pregnancy

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# Vision for GM: Lighter debt load, mostly US-owned



**FILE - In this file photo taken June 3, 2008, new General Motors Hummer SUVs sit on a dealer lot in Benton, Ark. The government lays out its road map for General Motors, Thursday, May 28, 2009, a plan that would erase most of its debt, give the U.S. an overwhelming majority stake and eventually bring the company out of bankruptcy protection leaner and stronger. GM still has to decide the fate of its Hummer and Saturn brands and determine which 14 plants it will close.**

*(AP Photo/Danny Johnston, File)*

By TOM KRISHER and KIMBERLY S. JOHNSON, AP Auto Writers

DETROIT—The government's new road map for General Motors would briefly send it into bankruptcy, erase most of its debt and eventually have it emerge leaner and stronger — and almost three-quarters owned by the taxpayers.

The outline came together Thursday after a bloc of GM's biggest bondholders agreed to a sweetened deal proposed

by the Treasury Department to wipe out the automaker's unsecured debt in exchange for company stock. But GM still must settle on a buyer for its European Opel unit and decide the fate of its Hummer and Saturn brands, while workers across the country await news expected Monday on which 14 plants the company will close, shedding 21,000 more jobs. Efforts to sever its relationship with 2,600 dealers will

probably be tied up in the bankruptcy proceedings.

A person familiar with GM's plans said it was "probable" that the company would file for bankruptcy protection Monday — the government's deadline for GM to restructure. The person did not want to be identified because the plans were still under discussion with the U.S. and Canadian governments.

Under the proposal, outlined in a regulatory filing, GM's good and bad assets would be separated under what the Obama administration hopes will be a speedy Chapter 11 reorganization that will let GM thrive when people are ready to buy cars again.

The U.S. Treasury, which already has loaned GM \$19.4 billion, would get 72.5 percent of the new company's stock and provide \$30 billion in additional financing to keep the new GM operating under bankruptcy protection.

Canada's government is expected to provide an additional \$9 billion, a senior Obama administration official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity

because of the sensitivity of the negotiations.

A United Auto Workers trust that will take over retiree health care expenses will get 17.5 percent, and the old GM, effectively owned by the bondholders, would get a 10 percent stake.

GM's existing shareholders will probably lose everything. "It's fair to say that there would be little to no recovery," the administration official said.

The proposal is similar to what has happened to Chrysler, already in Chapter 11 protection. A bankruptcy judge is weighing whether to approve the sale of most of its assets to Italian carmaker Fiat.

The administration official estimated that GM would be under bankruptcy protection for 60 to 90 days, longer than Chrysler's expected reorganization because GM is bigger and more complex.

The official said that although the government hopes to get back as much of the money loaned to GM and Chrysler as possible, it never envisioned recovering much of the initial \$13.4 billion in aid.

Eventually, the government hopes, GM can return to profitability, which would allow the government to sell its GM stock.

But the risks for taxpayers are

daunting, with U.S. auto sales near their lowest level in 27 years.

"We will come out of this rid of some of the historic legacy costs that have been dragging us down for the last 20 years or so," GM Vice Chairman Bob Lutz said Thursday at an Automotive Press Association luncheon in Detroit. "We will come out of it with an all new focus on product development."

GM plans to cut the nameplates it sells in North America by one-fourth and keep only four brands — Chevrolet, Cadillac, GMC and Buick — after jettisoning Hummer, Saturn, Pontiac and Saab.

Under the government's offer, bondholders would get 10 percent of the stock in a newly formed GM, the same as a proposal that they shunned earlier this week. But the new offer also gives them warrants to buy an additional 15 percent stake, possibly at a discount.

That would come only if they agree to support selling GM's assets to a new company under bankruptcy court protection.

The revised offer amounted to an ultimatum: Go along with the government auto task force's proposal or face substantial reduction in the amount of stock and warrants they will get. □



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# Stocks jump on relief over gov't debt auction

By TIM PARADIS,  
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK – Interest rate movements called the shots on Wall Street for the second straight day.

The bond market recovered on Thursday, bringing stocks along with it, a day after panicky selling pushed long-term borrowing rates to their highest level in six months. Stock indicators rose more than 1 percent, including the Dow Jones industrial average, which gained almost 104 points.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury note, a widely used benchmark for mortgages and other kinds of loans, moved decisively lower to 3.62 percent from 3.75 percent the day before as investors were relieved to see ample demand at an auction for Treasury debt.

The note's yield had surged the day before, triggering a selloff in stocks, on concerns that a flood of U.S. government debt coming to market this year would overwhelm demand. In addition to raising borrowing costs for the government, higher yields on long-term Treasurys could threaten a recovery by driving up borrowing costs for consumers. The Federal Reserve has said it would buy large amounts of Treasurys and other kinds of debt in an effort to keep borrowing costs low.

Stock trading could remain jumpy going forward as investors look closely at interest rates as well as economic data for confirmation that the market's aggressive bet this spring on an economic recovery is still sound. The Standard & Poor's 500 index is still up 34 percent from a 12-year low in early March.

"The market is absolutely being held hostage to the data," said David Joy, chief market strategist at Ameriprise Financial Inc.'s RiverSource Investments. Joy pointed to the market's immediate reaction after the Treasury auction Thursday of \$26 billion in 7-year notes, part of the \$101 billion in

debt the government offered this week. "There was a real sigh of relief," he said. The Dow rose 103.78, or 1.3 percent, to 8,403.80. The S&P 500 index rose 13.77, or 1.5 percent, to 906.83, and the Nasdaq composite index advanced 20.71, or 1.2 percent, to 1,751.79.

The day's gains returned the S&P 500 index to the black for the year after sliding on Wednesday. The Dow is down 4.3 percent in 2009, while the Nasdaq is up 11.1 percent.

The stock market logged its best month in nine years in April, but the advances heading into the final day of trading for May are far more modest. Still, a gain for May would mark the third straight month of rising stock prices. Trading was choppy in the first half of the day on Thursday, following disappointing news on new home sales and foreclosures, while energy shares drew support from a jump in crude oil prices.

Light, sweet crude rose \$1.63 to settle at \$65.08 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, a six-month high. Marathon Oil Corp. jumped \$1.77, or 6.1 percent, to \$31.01, and Devon Energy Corp. rose \$2.02, or 3.4 percent, to \$62.31.

New data on the housing market — a key area of concern for investors — wasn't encouraging.

The government said sales of new homes edged up only 0.3 percent in April, less than analysts expected, and a separate report showed that a record 12 percent of mortgage holders were behind on payments or in foreclosure in the first quarter.

Homebuilder stocks fell after the poor housing data

came out and on worries that mortgage rates could move higher. Toll Brothers Inc. fell 58 cents, or 3.2 percent, to \$17.44, while Beazer Homes USA Inc. fell 18 cents, or 7 percent, to \$2.39.

"We still have headwinds ahead, in terms of the housing market going down," said Michael Sheldon, chief market strategist at RDM Financial Group.

Financial stocks also rose. JPMorgan Chase & Co. rose \$1.99, or 5.7 percent, to \$36.65, while PNC Financial Services Group Inc. rose \$2.55, or 6.2 percent, to \$43.66.

Investors were also focusing on General Motors Corp., which said a committee of bondholders agreed to a sweetened deal to erase some

of GM's unsecured debt in exchange for stock. The agreement may not prevent the automaker from seeking bankruptcy court protection, but investors are eager for any signs that a reorganization would be orderly. GM shares rose 15 cents, or 13 percent, to \$1.30.

In other trading Thursday, the Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 2.35, or 0.5 percent, to 492.21.

About two stocks rose for every one that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where consolidated volume came to 5.6 billion shares, compared with 5.5 billion shares Wednesday.

The dollar was mixed against other major currencies. Gold prices rose.

Overseas, Britain's FTSE 100



**Atsushi Saito, President and CEO, Tokyo Stock Exchange Group, Inc., presents his views on the causes of the recent financial crisis and the status of capital market competition at the Japan Society in New York, Thursday, May 28, 2009.**

(AP Photo/Osamu Honda)

fell 0.7 percent, Germany's DAX index fell 1.4 percent, and France's CAC-40 slid 0.8 percent. Japan's Nikkei stock average edged up 0.1 percent. □

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# The Battle of Lebanon

**Robert Dreyfuss**

The Nation -- Five days before the crucial elections in Iran on June 12, voters go to the polls in another Middle East country: Lebanon. The stakes in Lebanon are high, since it's looking more and more likely that Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed Shiite fundamentalist group, and its allies will win a majority and take control of the government in Beirut. That would create a fundamental choice for the Obama administration: does the United States continue to have contact with, and send military aid to, a Lebanese government controlled by Israel's implacable foe?

Last year, in a power-sharing deal brokered by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, Hezbollah was given a share of power in the Lebanese state proportional to its strength in parliament and on the ground, after massive pro-Hezbollah demonstrations rocked the country.

Expect a lot of outside meddling in Lebanon during the next two weeks -- on all sides.

An early shot was fired this week from Germany, where *Der Spiegel*, the conservative weekly magazine, revealed that investigators probing the 2005 murder of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri have concluded that Hezbollah, and not Syria, is responsible for the spectacular bombing that killed Hariri, a pro-Western billionaire with close ties to France and Saudi Arabia. (Hariri's son, Saad Hariri, is leading the anti-Hezbollah coalition in the June 7 election.)

What's interesting about the *Der Spiegel* exclusive, if true, is not only that it exonerates Syria, but that it blames Hezbollah. The magazine reports that the UN special tribunal in the case intended to withhold its conclusion until late June, i.e., until after the election. The fact that it is now being reported makes the *Spiegel* report seem like a calculated leak designed to undercut Hezbollah's election chances.

Reports the magazine:

*Spiegel* has learned from sources close to the tribunal and verified by examining internal documents, that the Hariri case is about to take a sensational turn. Intensive investigations in Lebanon are all pointing to a new conclusion: that it was not the Syrians, but instead special forces of the Lebanese Shiite organization Hezbollah ("Party of God") that planned and executed the diabolical attack. Tribunal chief prosecutor Bellemare and his judges apparently want to hold back this information, of which they been aware for about a month. What are they afraid of?

That's a good question -- "What are they afraid of?" -- but another good question is: what's the motive of the people who leaked the super-secret conclusion? (And two other questions: is the *Der Spiegel* report correct that the UN panel has concluded that Hezbollah killed Hariri? And, if they have concluded that, is their conclusion true?) Writing in the *Washington Times*, former Dick Cheney aide John Hannah, now at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a pro-Israel thinktank with neoconservative ties, rings every alarm bell he can reach:

Make no mistake: Hezbollah's triumph would constitute a major U.S. defeat. Despite the Obama administration's overtures to Iran, it remains the case that across the Middle East, the battle for Lebanon is understood as part of a much larger struggle for power being waged by Washington and Tehran.

The formal collapse of the Cedar Revolution would send shockwaves throughout the region, providing powerful confirmation of Iran's ascendancy and America's decline. It would dramatically embolden Teheran at a time when Washington hopes to negotiate an end to Iran's nuclear weapons program, its support for terrorism and its escalating efforts -- frequently using Hezbollah operatives -- to subvert pro-U.S. governments across the Arab world from Iraq to Egypt to Morocco.

From Iraq to Morocco! Whew! Talk about the Domino Theory. In fact, the Hezbollah victory would do nothing of the kind, except that it would ratify the democratic expression of what the Lebanese people want. If Hezbollah does win, its victory will be marginal, only a few points, and Lebanese politics will continue to be balanced on a knife's edge, complicated by the presence of armed militias and ethnic warlords across the political spectrum.

America's view of the Lebanon election is pretty clear. Recently, both Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have made high-profile visits to Beirut to boost the chances of the Hariri-led coalition. No doubt, pro-American, conservative Sunni countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt are pouring millions of dollars into the anti-Hezbollah effort, while Iran is doing the same -- along with Syria -- for the other side.

Meanwhile, less might be at stake than Hannah suggests. As the *Jerusalem Post* notes, Hezbollah will be a power in Lebanon whether it wins or loses:

Even if Hizbulah loses the upcoming election, it will continue to control Lebanon. It is the strongest force in Lebanon by far, and the country's Shi'ite community is growing. The Christians in the North have been weakened, and the Druse in the central region will strike a deal with anyone who furthers their interests. Nobody will separate Hizbulah from its weapons, and the group will continue to strengthen and deepen its control of Lebanon.

What's really at stake is not Hezbollah's power and its ability to send dominos toppling, but its international credibility -- and the crucial question of whether the United States will (a) deal with a Hezbollah-controlled government or (b) treat it like Hamas, which was duly elected in the Palestinian territories and then quarantined by the United States. As the *New York Times* reports today, Hezbollah is already gaining legitimacy: Hezbollah, the Shiite militant group, has talked with the International Monetary Fund and the European Union about continued financial support to Lebanon in the event the group's political alliance wins the June 7 parliamentary elections, Hezbollah officials said Wednesday. □

## Good News on the Mortgage Mess

By Peter Coy Peter Coy

Smart shoppers for used cars know how to avoid lemons. Now buyers of residential mortgage-backed securities are likewise learning how to distinguish the bad from the good. That bodes well for healing housing finance.

Prices of privately issued mortgage bonds, which fell sharply earlier this year, have rebounded well since early March. According to Amherst Securities Group, a specialized broker-dealer, mortgage bonds backed by 30-year fixed-rate prime loans issued in 2006-07 are trading for a little less than 80% on the dollar, up from just 55% in March. Adjustable-rate loans rated in between prime and subprime and issued in 2006-07 are trading for about 60% on the dollar, up from less than 40% in March. That's evidence that buyers are scouting for value instead of treating the whole market as undifferentiated toxic waste.

Meanwhile, early repayments of principal are rapidly shrinking the \$3.7 trillion pool of residential mortgage-backed securities that were issued privately during the go-go years, 2004 through 2007. The smaller the pool gets, the less trouble it can cause. When a borrower pays off a mortgage ahead of schedule, the owners of the mortgage-backed securities get their money back early, and the face values of their bonds shrink. The shrinkage is happening on both ends of the spectrum: Creditworthy borrowers are prepaying as they refinance into cheaper mortgages made possible by easy monetary policy. The least creditworthy, meanwhile, are losing their homes to foreclosure. That's cleansing the system as investors receive whatever the foreclosed house resells for (minus fees) and write off the rest of what they were owed as a loss.

**Help from the Market**

Amazingly, only \$1.7 trillion worth of the \$3.7 trillion in securities remains, according to Standard & Poor's Market, Credit, & Risk Strategies group (mhp.), which, like *BusinessWeek*, is a unit of the McGraw-Hill Companies. All this even before the launch of the government's Public-Private Investment Program, which is intended to move those assets into stronger hands. "The market has kind of resolved a lot of the problem," argues Michael G. Thompson, the managing director who runs the S&P group, which is separate from the ratings group.

As any used-car dealer knows, you can't fetch a decent price for your good cars if shoppers suspect that all you have on the lot is lemons. In the mortgage market, that problem is slowly being solved through improved disclosure. Credit bureaus and loan servicers are getting better at disclosing the existence of second-lien mortgages upon request. □

# Dell profit falls 63 percent as PC sales stay soft

By JESSICA MINTZ,  
AP Technology Writer

SEATTLE - Dell Inc. said Thursday its fiscal first-quarter profit fell 63 percent as the recession continued to crimp computer sales around the world.

The results, coupled with a cautious outlook from the world's top PC seller, Hewlett-Packard Co., indicate that the computer market has not improved much since last year's economic meltdown led to a holiday season that was the industry's worst stretch in six years.

Dell's earnings for the three months that ended May 1 sank to \$290 million, or 15 cents per share, from \$784 million, or 38 cents per share, in the same period last year.

The most recent results included a 9-cent charge from closing facilities and paying severance to laid-off workers.

Excluding the charge, Dell earned 24 cents per share, or a penny better than analysts had predicted, according to a Thomson Reuters survey.

Sales dropped 23 percent to \$12.3 billion, lower than the \$12.6 billion analysts had predicted for Round Rock, Texas-based Dell.

In a conference call, Chief Financial Officer Brian Gladden said sales picked up toward the end of the quarter, but that is normal for the time of year. Looking ahead, Gladden said orders and conversations with customers yield

"mixed signals."

"We would hope that we would see improved demand in the later part of the year," Gladden said. "Hopefully sooner versus later."

Hewlett-Packard's CEO, Mark Hurd, has expressed similar caution. Speaking at an investor conference Thursday, Hurd would not say when he thought the PC market would begin to rebound.

That is in contrast to Paul Otellini, the CEO of Intel Corp., the world's biggest supplier of PC microprocessors, who has said sales already appear to have bottomed out and returned to normal seasonal patterns.

At Dell, sales of laptops and the smaller, less powerful netbooks, which together make up Dell's largest product category, fell 20 percent in the quarter.

Recession-weary shoppers' preference for netbooks and low-end PCs dragged average prices down 8 percent.

Revenue from large enterprises and small and medium-sized businesses worldwide fell about 30 percent. Consumer sales dropped 16 percent.

Dell said it slashed operating expenses by 15 percent from a year ago to \$1.8 billion as the PC maker tries to squeeze \$4 billion out of its annual costs.

Shares of Dell edged up 12 cents to \$11.60 in after-hours trading. □



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# Big Apple readies to greet a royal little brother

By VERENA DOBNIK,  
Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — He's a 24-year-old Londoner whose grandmother offered to pay for his trip to New York.

On Friday, Prince Harry will start his first official visit to America, with plans including a stop at the World Trade Center site, meetings with wounded veterans and a polo match.

"Prince Harry is well known and respected in the United States for having deployed alongside U.S. forces in Afghanistan," said Alan Collins, the British consul general in New York.

Third in line to the British throne, the red-haired prince is a much-watched member of the royal family on both sides of the Atlantic. His party-boy image, romantic escapades and brushes with scandal regularly make newspaper headlines. Several years ago, Harry had to apologize for wearing a Nazi swastika armband to a

friend's costume party.

But the younger son of the late Princess Diana and Prince Charles plans, no doubt, to be on his best behavior representing his country's crown during his two-day New York visit.

His grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II, is paying privately for Harry's travel and that of his staff, easing the young prince into his royal role. He's in line for the throne behind his older brother, William, and his father, Charles.

At midday Friday at the World Trade Center site, Harry is to meet with relatives of four people who died in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. They'll be joined by New York Gov. David Paterson and officials of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the agency that oversees development at ground zero.

"It's a testament to our loved ones that royalty from another country is coming and expressing interest," said

Monica Iken, who lost her husband, Michael, a 37-year-old bond broker.

"When Harry goes to ground zero, he can see how much progress has been made at this construction site," said Iken, who founded September's Mission, a nonprofit organization devoted to building a positive legacy in the aftermath of Sept. 11.

Later Friday, the prince will formally name the British Garden in downtown Hanover Square to honor the 67 British victims of the terrorist attack. Harry also will visit the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Manhattan, where he will tour the prosthetics facilities and a post-traumatic stress disorder clinic. He will be joined by Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans.

A British soldier who lost both legs in an explosion in Afghanistan will accompany Harry on his American trip. Joe Townsend, 21, stepped on a Taliban anti-tank mine last

year in Helmand Province, about the same time the prince was commanding troops nearby.

Harry is training to be an Army helicopter pilot and was the first member of the royal family to serve on the front line since his uncle, Prince Andrew, fought in the Falklands in 1982.

On Saturday, Harry is to participate in the only recreational event on his public schedule — the Veuve Clicquot Manhattan Polo Classic on Governors Island in New York Harbor, where he'll face off against Argentinian polo player and heartthrob Nacho Figueras.

The match will benefit American Friends of Sentebale, a U.S.-based charity that supports impoverished children in Lesotho, Africa, where the prince has worked and produced the documentary film "The Forgotten Kingdom."

Earlier Saturday, Harry is to see



**FILE - In this June 5, 2008 file photo, Britain's Prince Harry arrives at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff, Wales, to open an exhibition of tapestries from Lesotho. Harry arrives in New York Friday, May 29, 2009 for his first official visit to America, with plans including a stop at the World Trade Center site, meetings with wounded veterans and a polo match.**

(AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth, Pool, File)

the Harlem Children's Zone, a community organization that offers families social and educational services. The prince will be accompanied by Sentebale's co-founder, Prince Seeiso of Lesotho. □

# Danny Boyle Convenes Slumdog Kid Summit in Mumbai



Gina Serpe Gina

Los Angeles (E! Online) — Danny Boyle doesn't need an Oscar-caliber script to create engrossing drama with his child stars—all he needs is an irate father.

The Oscar-winning Slumdog Millionaire director today met with slum-dwelling child actors Rubina Ali and Azharuddin Mohammed Ismail and their families to discuss the status of the homes

promised to them in the wake of the film's success.

The issue has become even more pressing after the families of 9-year-old Ali and 10-year-old Ismail both lost their homes earlier this month in a premonsoon citywide razing of illegal shanties—shelters that amounted to little more than plastic sheets propped up by bamboo sticks.

"We've been trying for a long time to move them into legal

accommodation," Boyle told reporters at Mumbai's Tata Institute of Social Sciences, where he and fellow producer Christian Colson met with the families.

"Inevitably, the tension and pressure is media generated. They were given access to a world, an extraordinary and glamorous world, and they understandably want their lives to be completely transformed."

Boyle, who along with the film's producers set up the Jai Ho Trust to provide money for college education and living expenses for the child stars, has already found a home for Ismail's family and is still searching for an acceptable residence for the Alis. Producers are expected to spend \$100,000 on the new abodes.

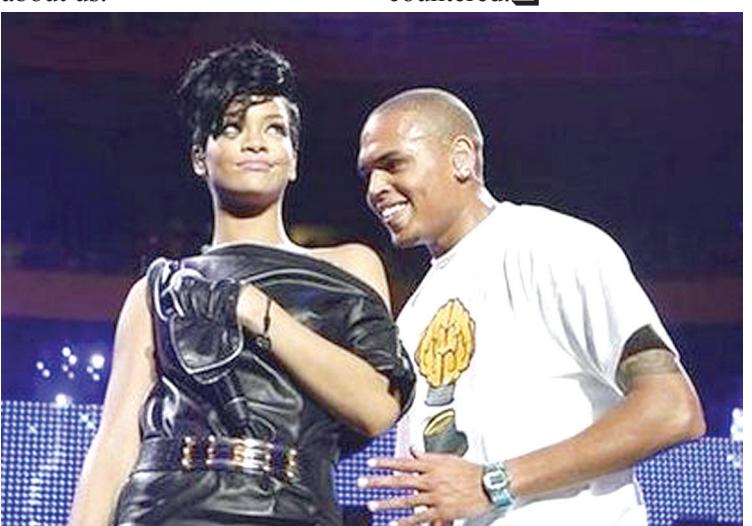
However, tensions quickly boiled over in the meeting as Ali's father, Rafiq Quereshi, the same man accused and cleared last month of attempting to sell his daughter, stormed out, saying he was fed up with waiting.

"It has been five to six

months," he said. "Everything is available in Mumbai if you have the money. If you really want to get us a house, you can get us a house in two days."

"After the Oscars they forgot about us."

"We have been trying to accelerate the process of rehousing the families, and one of the reasons we set up the trust is to deal with emergencies like this," Colson countered. □



**Musicians Chris Brown and Rihanna perform during the Z100 Jingle Ball in New York December 13, 2008.**

REUTERS/Lucas Jackson

# Rihanna to testify in Brown case

By Alex Dobuzinskis

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — Pop star Rihanna is prepared to take the witness stand next month if called to testify against former boyfriend Chris Brown, the singer accused of beating her, her lawyer said on Thursday.

Donald Etra said prosecutors told him they will formally request his client, Rihanna, to appear at the June 22 hearing in Los Angeles Superior Court. □



A South Korean Marine stands guard in alert on Yeonpyeong Island, west of mainland South Korea, Thursday, May 28, 2009. South Korean and U.S. troops raised their alert Thursday to the highest level since 2006 after North Korea renounced its peace treaty with the allied forces and threatened to strike any ships trying to intercept its vessels.

*Associated Press*

## U.S., S. Korea militaries gird for North Korean provocation

JAE-SOON CHANG

*Associated Press Writer*

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The U.S. and South Korea put their military forces on high alert Thursday after North Korea renounced the truce keeping the peace between the two Koreas since 1953.

The North also accused the U.S. of preparing to attack the isolated communist country in the wake of its second nuclear bomb test, and warned it would retaliate to any hostility with "merciless" and dangerous ferocity.

Seoul moved a 3,500-ton destroyer into waters near the Koreas' disputed western maritime border while smaller, high-speed vessels were keeping guard at the front line, South Korean news reports said. The defense ministry said the U.S. and South Korean militaries would increase surveillance activities.

Pyongyang, meanwhile, positioned artillery guns along the west coast on its side of the border, the Yonhap news agency said. The Joint Chiefs of Staffs in Seoul refused to confirm the reports.

The show of force along the heavily fortified border dividing the two Koreas comes three days after North Korea conducted an underground nuclear test and fired a series of short-range missiles.

The test drew immediate condemnation from world leaders and the U.N. Security Council, where ambassadors were discussing a new resolution to punish Pyongyang. President Barack Obama called it a "blatant violation" of international law.

In response, South Korea said it would join more than 90 nations that have agreed to stop and inspect vessels suspected of transporting weapons of mass destruction.

North Korea called South Korea's participation in the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative a prelude to a naval blockade and a violation of the truce signed to end the three-year war that broke out in Korea in 1950.

On Wednesday Pyongyang renounced the 1953 armistice and the following day warned U.S. forces against advancing into its territory.

"The northward invasion scheme by the U.S. and the South Korean puppet regime has exceeded the alarming level," the North's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper said in a commentary carried by the official Korean Central News Agency. "A minor accidental skirmish can lead to a nuclear war."

The U.S., which has 28,500 troops in South Korea and another 50,000 in Japan, has denied it is planning military action.

*Continued on Next Page*

## '75 Gerald Ford attacker hoped to start revolution

NEW YORK — The woman who fired a gun at President Gerald Ford in 1975 and spent the next 32 years in prison said in an interview Thursday that she believed the country would change only through a violent revolution.

Sara Jane Moore told NBC's "Today" that she now realizes that her actions, stemming from her involvement in radical politics, were "wrong ... a serious error."

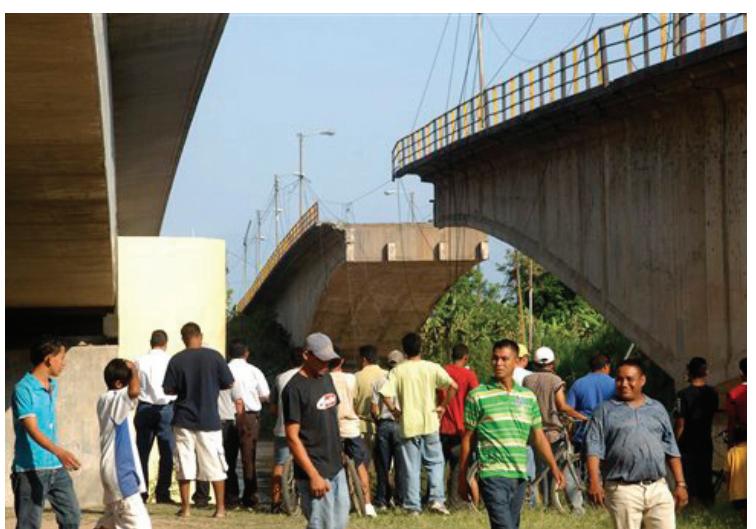
In Sept. 22, 1975, Moore, then around 45, fired on Ford as he waved to a crowd in San Francisco. A man near her knocked the pistol out of her hand and the shot went astray. It was the second failed attempt on Ford's life in less than three weeks.

*Continued on Page B3*



Sara Jane Moore, the woman who fired a gun at President Gerald Ford in 1975 and spent the next 32 years in prison, waits to hear the concert on the NBC "Today" television program after her interview on the show in New York Thursday, May 28, 2009.

*Associated Press*



People stand underneath the Democracy Bridge, which spans the largest river in Honduras, the Ulua, after its central portion collapsed in El Progreso, Honduras due to a strong earthquake that rocked the country in the early morning hours of Thursday, May 28, 2009. The magnitude-7.1 quake struck at 2:24 a.m. off the Caribbean coast of Honduras, killing at least four people and injuring 40, according to Honduras emergency response officials.

*Associated Press*

## 7.1 earthquake topples homes, kills 6 in Honduras

FREDDY CUEVAS

*Associated Press Writer*

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — A powerful earthquake toppled dozens of homes in Honduras and Belize early Thursday, killing at least six people and injuring 40 as terrified residents spilled from their homes across much of Central America.

*Continued on Page B6*

**NKOREA PROVOCATION****Continued from Page B1**

But U.S. and South Korean troops were placed on their highest alert level for more than two years.

The South Korea-U.S. combined forces command rates its surveillance alert on a scale to 5, with 1 being the highest level. On Thursday, the level was raised from 3 to 2, the second-highest level, South Korean Defense Ministry spokesman Won Tae-jae said. He said the last time the alert level was that high was in 2006, when the North conducted its first nuclear test.

Won said both militaries were raising their surveillance activities, although he would not explain what that meant. South Korean media reported that the higher alert would involve increased monitoring of North Korea using satellites and navy ships.

The U.N. Command on Korea said it would continue to observe the armistice, saying it "remains in force and is binding on all signatories, including North Korea."

North Korea has repudiated the armistice several times before, most recently in 2003 and 2006.

South Korean Foreign

Ministry spokesman Moon Tae-young accused the North of "seriously distorting" the decision to join in the initiative.

Seoul has said its military would "respond sternly" to any North Korean provocation, and that it would be able to contain the North with the help of U.S. troops.

The South Korean military has dispatched "personnel and equipment deployment" along its land and sea borders, a Joint Chiefs of Staff officer said. He spoke on condition of anonymity citing department policy.

He said there has been no particular movement of North Korean troops in border areas.

The two Koreas technically remain at war because they signed a truce, not a peace treaty, in 1953. However, North disputes the U.N.-drawn maritime border off their west coast, and used that dispute to provoke deadly naval skirmishes in 1999 and 2002.

South Korea's mass-circulation JoongAng Ilbo newspaper said more anti-air missiles and artillery were dispatched to military bases on islands near the disputed western sea border with North



**Secretary of Defense Robert Gates arrives for a graduation and commissioning ceremony at the United States Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., Saturday, May 23, 2009.**

*Associated Press*

Korea.

Yonhap said the destroyer has artillery guns, anti-ship guided missiles, ship-to-air missiles and torpedoes. Air force fighters are were on standby, the report said.

North Korea's West Sea fleet has 13 submarines and more than 360 vessels, Yonhap said.

The recent flurry of belligerence could reflect an effort by 67-year-old leader Kim Jong Il to boost his standing among his impoverished people.

It was also seen as a test of

Obama's new administration, and came as two Americans, journalists Euna Lee and Laura Ling, remained in custody in Pyongyang accused of illegal entry and "hostile acts." They face trial in Pyongyang next week.

Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso said any new Security Council resolution must be stronger than the one issued after the North's first atomic test in October 2006, and contain sanctions.

A Russian Foreign Ministry official said Moscow did not

want to see Pyongyang further isolated. Andrei Nesterenko said Russia opposed sanctions but did not object to a U.N. resolution.

Hong Hyun-ik, a senior analyst at the Sejong Institute security think tank, said sanctions would not be effective unless China — North Korea's traditional ally — implemented them.

"Kim Jong Il must be scoffing" at the talk of sanctions, he said. "He knows the world will forget about any sanctions in the end." □

## Report chronicles abuse of federal travel cards

By JIM ABRAMS

**Associated Press Writer**

WASHINGTON — Laser eye surgery may improve one's visual horizons, but it doesn't qualify as a travel expense, a congressional office says in a report on abuses of the federal travel card system. The Congressional Research Service, in a recent survey, found that federal employees in a wide range of agencies misuse travel cards to buy goods for their personal use, travel first-class or simply bilk the government.

Among the examples: a Federal Aviation Administration employee who charged \$3,700 for laser eye surgery; a Pentagon employee who received reimbursements for 13 airline tickets totaling almost \$10,000 that he never purchased; and a State Department employee who took an unauthorized trip to Hawaii on a first-class ticket. Auditors had also determined that certain agencies have not collected reimbursement for millions of dollars worth of unused airline tickets and had repeatedly failed to pay travel card invoices in a timely manner, according to the report.

"A private travel agency would be out of business running this kind of operation," said Scott Amey, general counsel of the independent Project on Government Oversight. He said the CRS report

points out the need for immediate improvements, including better oversight of all transactions and increased penalties for misuse.

A 1998 law requires any federal employee who travels more than five times a year to use travel cards. The CRS said travel card spending increased from \$4.39 billion in fiscal year 1999 to \$8.28 billion in fiscal year 2008.

The report said one major problem is the failure of agencies to determine whether tickets have been used. It cited a Government Accountability Office study finding that over a seven-year period the Department of Defense may have purchased more than \$100 million in airline tickets that were not used and had not been processed for refunds. Similarly, the State Department failed to seek reimbursement for \$6 million in unused airline tickets over an 18-month period.

The report also referred to Office of Management and Budget data showing that the Pentagon had a delinquency rate on centrally billed travel card accounts of 20 percent. NASA's delinquency rate was almost 16 percent. Federal agencies received about \$187 million in rebates from card vendors in fiscal 2008, and failure to pay bills in a timely fashion prevented agencies from earning the maximum rebates.

Finally, the CRS said some agencies did a poor job of ensuring that premium-class accommodations were used only when justified. A 2003 audit by the GAO found that over a two-year period the Pentagon bought \$123 million in premium-class tickets. Of that, \$90 million were not authorized, not justified, or both.

The CRS report dealt only with travel cards. Federal agencies also use purchase cards for supplies and services and fleet cards for fuel and service of vehicles.

Congress has held several hearings on abuses in the chargecard system, and last week the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee approved legislation requiring agencies to establish safeguards and controls for card systems and set penalties for violations.

"Agencies can't continue to look the other way while employees are going on shopping sprees at the taxpayers' expense," said Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, sponsor of the Senate bill. He said that among the fraudulent or questionable charge card tabs have been kitchen appliances, sapphire rings, gambling, cruises, gentlemen's clubs and legalized brothels.

Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., has a companion bill in the House. □

# Media groups seek access to terrorism evidence

GREG BLUESTEIN

Associated Press Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — News organizations asked a federal judge on Thursday to grant the media access to copies of audio and video court records key to the upcoming trial against a terrorism suspect. The motion seeks access to about 12 hours of an audiotaped FBI interview with Syed Haris Ahmed, who is set to go on trial Monday on charges that he aided a terrorist group.

It also seeks videos that prosecutors say he and another suspect filmed of potential terrorist targets in Washington.

"The public is entitled to understand the basis for the government's prosecution of Defendant Ahmed, and these audio and video exhibits are essential to properly appreciate the evidence in this case," wrote Thomas Clyde, an attorney who represents The Associated Press, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, CNN and WSB-TV.

The audio and video tapes were submitted as evidence by federal prosecutors in January 2008, and Ahmed's attorney asked that the exhibits be sealed.

A federal magistrate denied the request, but said the order was pending a review by a federal judge.

The motion contends the judge has yet to address the order.

Clyde said providing the press with a transcript of the tapes won't suffice.

The audio tapes, he argued, help portray the "demeanor, tone and conduct" of Ahmed shortly before his arrest and indictment. He contended the videos will show the

sophistication — or lack thereof — of the defendants' planning efforts, which cannot be conveyed properly to the public through a transcript." Ahmed, a 24-year-old former university student, and Ehsanul Islam Sadiquee were indicted in July 2006 on charges of providing material support to terrorists and related conspiracy counts. Both have pleaded not guilty to all charges. Sadiquee's trial is set to begin in August. They are accused of discussing terror targets with Islamic extremists and undergoing training to carry out a "violent jihad" against civilian and government targets, including an air base in suburban Atlanta. □

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**GERALD FORD ATTACKERS***Continued from Page B1*

Moore was sentenced to life in prison but released on parole in December 2007. She has lived in an undisclosed location since then.

It was during the long years in prison, she said, that "gradually I began to realize that I had let myself be used. ... I definitely think that it was wrong. I think I was misled. I think I was mistaken. I think I made a serious error."

Moore, who had been loosely associated with leftist groups in California, said she "wasn't prepared" for the things she learned about the extent of poverty and other problems. "It was a time that people don't remember. You know, we had a war ... the Vietnam War, you became — I became — immersed in it," Moore said Thursday.

"We were saying the country needed to change. The only way it was going to change was a violent revolution. I genuinely thought that (shooting Ford) might trigger that new revolution in this country."

She said she now knows she was hearing only one side of



FILE - In this Dec. 16, 1975 file photo, Sara Jane Moore looks out the window of a U.S. marshal's car in San Francisco. Moore, the woman who fired a gun at President Gerald Ford in 1975, told the "Today" show Thursday, May 28, 2009 that she believed that the country would change only through a violent revolution.

Associated Press

the story. "We thought San Francisco was the world, and it wasn't."

She recalled her brief escape from a West Virginia prison in 1977, saying that if she had known she'd be recaptured within hours, she would have "gotten a drink or a hamburger or something. ... I didn't take advantage of it."

Asked by NBC's Matt Lauer why she was doing the interview now, she said, "I think that one gets tired of being thought of as a kook, a monster, an alien, something like that. ... There has been a

lot of curiosity. I thought, OK, let's do it."

As for the people in the town where she's now living, who would learn about her past through the interview, "I hope they're OK with it." Just 17 days weeks before Moore's attack, Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme, a follower of cult murderer Charles Manson, tried to kill Ford in Sacramento, Calif. A Secret Service agent grabbed her after she aimed a pistol at the president. Fromme, now 60, is serving a life sentence at a federal prison in Fort Worth, Texas. □

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# Obama says health care changes must come this year



By PHILIP ELLIOTT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama warned Thursday that if Congress doesn't deliver health care legislation by the end of the year, the opportunity will

be lost, a plea to political supporters to pressure lawmakers to act. "If we don't get it done this year, we're not going to get it done," Obama told supporters by phone as he flew home on Air Force One from a West Coast fundraising

trip.

Obama's political organization, Organizing for America, invited campaign volunteers to a midday conference call to describe a nationwide June 6 kickoff for its health care campaign. The president's message to his re-election campaign-in-waiting was simple: If volunteers don't pressure lawmakers to support the White House's goal on health care, Washington would drag its feet and nothing would change.

"The election in November — that did not bring about change, it just gave us an opportunity for change," Obama said. "So now, we are really going to have to remobilize, we have all had a chance to catch our breath after election and we have gotten a lot of things done during our first four months. "But health care, that's a big push."

The presidential plea came as lawmakers prepare for an aggressive schedule of

work aimed at producing comprehensive health care overhaul bills in the House and Senate by August.

Committee hearings — and soon thereafter votes — will start next week, as soon as lawmakers return to Washington from a weeklong recess. Many members of Congress spent the break holding town hall meetings and other forums with their constituents about health care, even as opponents and supporters of Obama's plans ramped up television and radio ads for and against.

"I think the status quo is unacceptable and that we've got to get it done this year," Obama repeated, ginning up his supporters for a door-to-door and phone-to-phone canvass similar to his presidential campaign.

Obama's top aides, including former campaign manager David Plouffe, told the supporters they have a challenge ahead of them.

"If the country stands with the president and if the country is demanding health care reform then we'll get it done; Washington will not have any option but to follow us," Plouffe said on the call, which was not announced on the White House's official schedule.

The president's conversation with his supporters was part

pep talk and part a nod to political reality. Obama is looking to use his network of supporters to deliver a campaign promise, and if he seeks a second term in 2012 — an almost certainty — he hopes to keep many of those volunteers engaged in person and online.

"This is our big chance to prove that the movement that you started during the campaign isn't over, we're just getting started," Obama said.

The president said the costs of the nation's \$2.5 trillion health care system are crushing families and businesses and pose the largest threat to the economy.

The White House is leaving it to lawmakers to work out the details of a health care plan, but Obama has said it should ensure choice and lower costs, while extending coverage to the 50 million Americans now uninsured. The cost of accomplishing that has been estimated around \$1.5 trillion, and figuring out how to pay is emerging as a major challenge for Congress and the White House.

The Republican National Committee said Obama's approach was not the right path, arguing that Democrats are pushing for a government-run health care system that will take away individual choice. □

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# Nebraska's gov. signs lethal injection bill

JOSH FUNK

Associated Press Writer

LINCOLN, Nebraska (AP)

— Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman signed a bill Thursday to change the state's method of execution from electrocution to lethal injection, although observers said it could be years before the law is applied.

Nebraska was the only state

with electrocution as its sole means of execution. It had been without a means of execution since February 2008, when the state Supreme Court ruled the electric chair was unconstitutional because it amounted to cruel and unusual punishment.

With the bill signed Thursday, Nebraska became the 36th state to use lethal injection

as its primary method of execution. The Death Penalty Information Center said nine states still allow electrocution as a method.

Before signing the bill, Heineman noted there was "broad support for the death penalty in our state."

Thirty six of America's 50 states have the death penalty and polls show 60 percent of

Americans support executions, mostly in the conservative South.

But the Nebraska bill drew opposition in earlier debate from Senators who said it was only likely to lead to more appeals for the 11 men currently on death row. The state's last execution was in 1997.

The bill, which was set to take effect Sept. 1, did not lay out a procedure for how the death penalty would be carried out. It directed the state Department of Correctional Services to develop the protocol for lethal injections.

Attorney General Jon Bruning said he expected the state would have a protocol in place within a year and be ready to request an execution date for a condemned inmate within two or three years.

Richard Dieter, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center in Washington, D.C., said Bruning's timetable might be optimistic in light of expected



**Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman, signs into law (LB36), a bill that changes the state's method of execution from electrocution to lethal injection at a ceremony in Lincoln, Neb., Thursday, May 28, 2009. Nebraska has been without a means of execution since February 2008, when the state Supreme Court ruled the electric chair was unconstitutional because it amounted to cruel and unusual punishment.**

*Associated Press*

civil rights and constitutional challenges in court.

"I would think it would be a while before Nebraska actually carries out one," Dieter said. □

# NYC man sues police for \$220M over alleged assault

By TOM HAYS

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — A man filed a \$220 million lawsuit on Thursday claiming that New York Police Department officers robbed him of his civil rights by sodomizing him with a baton in a subway station.

Michael Mineo, a body piercer who works in a tattoo parlor, spelled out his allegations in graphic terms after exiting federal court in Brooklyn with his lawyers.

"I'm embarrassed," the 24-year-old told reporters. "I didn't ask for this to happen to me. ... I'm a man. I was raped by four men who held me down and put a baton in my rectum. How am I supposed to feel?"

The suit against the city, NYPD and four officers alleges the patrolmen conspired to violate Mineo's rights on Oct. 15 with a "willfully malicious and vicious assault." It says the attack caused "extreme physical, mental and emotional harm and distress" and "exposed the plaintiff to public scandal and disgrace." The city Law Department said it would "thoroughly review" the court papers but declined to comment further.

Three officers named as defendants in the suit were

charged last year in a criminal indictment. Officer Richard Kern pleaded not guilty to sexual abuse and assault; and Alex Cruz and Andrew Morales pleaded not guilty to hindering prosecution and official misconduct on suspicion of covering up a crime. All three have vehemently denied the any wrongdoing.

Prosecutors allege that Kern and Morales spotted Mineo outside the subway station smoking marijuana. After they sought to stop him, he fled into the station, jumped a turnstile, ran toward the platform and hurdled another turnstile before he was pinned, handcuffed near a token booth and searched for drugs, they said.

With Mineo in a "helpless position" with his pants down, Kern took out a retractable baton and shoved it into the victim's buttocks, prosecutor said. The baton pierced Mineo's underwear, tore his rectum and drew blood, they said. To cover his tracks and with the other officers' knowledge, Kern wrote Mineo "a bogus summons" that was purposely backdated so it would be invalid, then warned him to keep quiet or face a felony, prosecutors said.

Police initially questioned Mineo's account and allowed the officers to stay on duty. But the case gained momentum in late October after Mineo's lawyers went public with his allegations and the district attorney launched a grand jury investigation.

If convicted, Kern could face up to 25 years in prison; the others could face up to four years. □

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A vehicle is seen destroyed when a portion of a home fell on it after an earthquake hit the town of San Manuel, Honduras, Thursday May 28, 2009. A magnitude-7.1 earthquake toppled dozens of homes in Honduras and Belize early Thursday, killing at least six people and injuring 40 as terrified residents spilled from their homes across much of Central America.

*Associated Press*

#### NKOREA

##### *Continued from Front Page*

The magnitude-7.1 quake struck at 2:24 a.m. off the Caribbean coast of Honduras, 80 miles northeast of the beach town of La Ceiba, according to the U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colorado.

"People were running for the door," Alfredo Cedeno said from the reception desk at the Gran Hotel Paris in La Ceiba. "You could really feel it and you could see it — the water came out of the pool."

Reynaldo Funez, 15, was buried in his house in Pineda

de la Lima, 120 miles north of the capital, Tegucigalpa, and 6-year-old Deily Yazmin Santos was killed when her house collapsed in the beach town of Morazan, national fire commander Col. Carlos Cordero said.

Ana Maria Rivera, spokeswoman for Honduras' Permanent Emergency Commission, said Jose Vicente Maradiaga died of a heart attack during the earthquake in the seaside town of Tela, and a 3-year-old boy was crushed when his roof collapsed in Mapulaca near

the Salvadoran border. She didn't have Maradiaga's age or the boy's name.

"It was an earthquake of great proportions," she said.

Two other people were killed in home collapses, according to the commission's chief, Marcos Burgos, who didn't have details. At least 40 people were injured, most along the Caribbean coast.

The earthquake destroyed at least 57 homes and damaged another 65, the commission said. It said 14 schools were damaged, as were two Roman Catholic churches and three bridges.

Democracy Bridge, which spans the country's largest river, the Ulua, collapsed in the town of El Progreso, Cordero said. The bridge is one of two connecting the northern city of San Pedro Sula, Honduras' second-largest, with the rest of the country. The second bridge was deemed safe.

"The central part of the bridge fell into the river," Cordero said.

San Pedro Sula is scheduled to host a summit of foreign ministers of the Organization of American States next week. OAS Secretary-General Jose Miguel Insulza said

in Washington the meeting would go on as planned.

In Belize, about five homes collapsed and an Associated Press reporter saw at least 25 others with severe damage. Many of the wooden shacks on stilts sunk several feet into ground.

In Monkey River, parts of the ground opened up and left gaping holes up to four feet (over a meter) deep. Residents heard dogs howling seconds before the quake hit.

"I heard this rumbling and I thought the rain is coming, but then I looked up at the sky and I saw all of the stars and I knew something was not right. Then the shaking started. It was pretty scary," said Malfry Garbutt, who grabbed her three small children and ran.

Before the quake, her wooden house on stilts was eight feet above the ground. After the quake, it was only three feet. A water tower toppled in the town of Independence and electricity was out all the way to the Mexican border, local officials said.

"I urge you not to panic, but to remain calm," National Emergency Minister Melvin Hulse said on the radio.

Honduran Education Minister

Marlon Breve closed schools along the coast and on the Bay Islands, and officials reported electricity, telephones and Internet connections were cut across a large part of the country. A local official with Internet provider Amnet said a fiber optic cable was cut, affecting service throughout Honduras and in other parts of Central America.

Closest to the epicenter were the idyllic islands of Roatan and Utila, where officials and hotel employees said there were no injuries or major damage. A tsunami watch was canceled for Honduras, Belize and Guatemala when no unusual waves appeared.

Raul Gonzalez, a receptionist at the Gran Hotel Sula in San Pedro Sula, said guests ran into the streets in their pajamas.

"I ran out of the building and kept going for about a block before I looked back and everything had calmed," he said. "It was really strong. I have never felt anything like that."

The hotel did not suffer major damage.

The quake was felt strongly in El Salvador, Guatemala and northern Nicaragua, but no major damage was reported in those countries. Don Blakeman, a U.S. Geological Survey expert, said people in Mexico and on several Caribbean islands also reported feeling the earthquake.

The quake was relatively shallow, with a depth of only 6 miles, increasing its potential to cause major damage, Blakeman said.

"It is still possible we may find out there was more damage, but I think the fact that this earthquake was a bit off shore has helped tremendously," he said.

"Obviously the farther away from the epicenter you get, there is less damage."

The USGS said a magnitude-4.8 aftershock struck off Honduras about three hours after the quake. □

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# Israel on edge as U.S. presses to halt settlements

**AMY TEIBEL**

**Associated Press Writer**

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel rejected on Thursday a U.S. demand to freeze all construction in West Bank Jewish settlements to encourage peace talks, deepening a dispute with the Obama administration that has the hard-line Israeli government increasingly on edge.

The tensions flared on the same day Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas was in Washington for a meeting with President Barack Obama. Abbas said the Palestinian demand for a settlement construction freeze would top his agenda.

Using unusually strong language, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Wednesday that Obama wants a halt to all settlement construction, including "natural growth." Israel uses that term for new housing and other construction that it says will accommodate the growth of families living in existing settlements.

Government spokesman Mark Regev responded Thursday by saying some construction would go on.

"Normal life in those communities must be allowed to continue," he said, noting Israel has already agreed not to build new settlements and to remove some tiny, unauthorized settler outposts. Regev said the fate of the settlements would be determined in peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

Former President George W. Bush gave Israel unwavering support during his eight-year term. But that appears to be changing under Obama.

The new U.S. administration has been more explicit in its criticism of Israeli settlement policy than its predecessor. Obama also pressed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in their first White House meeting last week to support creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel. But so far, Netanyahu has balked at that idea, too.

The growing pressure, coupled with Obama's outreach to the Muslim world that will be underscored by a speech in Cairo next week, has many Israelis wondering where exactly they fit into the president's plans. They are particularly concerned by Washington's efforts to start a dialogue with Iran, Israel's arch-foe, after nearly three decades of diplomatic estrangement.

Clinton said Obama told

Netanyahu last week at the White House that the U.S. sees stopping settlements as key to a peace deal that would see a Palestinian state created alongside Israel.

"He wants to see a stop to settlements — not some settlements, not outposts, not 'natural growth' exceptions," Clinton said. "We think it is in the best interests (of the peace process) that settlement expansion cease. That is our position. That is what we have communicated very clearly. ... And we intend to press that point."

While Israel could flout the U.S. opposition, Netanyahu is wary of a showdown with his most important ally. He has been careful to avoid direct conflict with the Americans, but members of his government have become openly critical.

Israel views its close relationship with the U.S. as fundamental to its security and foreign policy. If Israel refused to halt settlement construction, the U.S. could reduce economic or military aid, curtail arms sales, or scale back the close strategic cooperation the two countries currently have, including the sharing of information and joint projects, such as anti-missile systems. During a Cabinet debate on settlement outposts this week, Interior Minister Eli Yishai declared that Israel does not have to "kowtow to every American dictate."

"The American administration regrettably ... is showing the Arab and Muslim world that it is distancing itself from Israel and shifting toward them," Cabinet Minister Benny Begin lamented during a separate parliamentary debate. "The message is clear. The will is clear."

The U.S. and much of the world consider the settlements an obstacle to peace because they are built on captured land the Palestinians claim for a future state. But successive U.S. administrations have done little to halt settlement activity.

Now more than 120 settlements dot the West Bank, and Palestinian officials say their growth makes it increasingly impossible to realize their dream of independence. More than 280,000 Israelis live in the settlements, in addition to more than 2 million Palestinians in the West Bank. An additional 180,000 Israelis live in east Jerusalem, where the Palestinians



A Palestinian worker works at a construction site in the West Bank Jewish settlement of Maaleh Adumim, near Jerusalem, Thursday, May 28, 2009. Israel defied a surprisingly blunt U.S. demand that it freeze all building in West Bank Jewish settlements, saying Thursday it will press ahead with construction. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Wednesday that President Barack Obama wants Israel to halt to all settlement construction - including "natural growth."

*Associated Press*

hope to establish their capital. With the U.S. turning up the pressure to freeze settlements, Israeli officials proposed a compromise earlier this week. In exchange for removing some 22 outposts, they would ask the U.S. to permit new construction in existing settlements. Clinton's remarks followed that proposal. Along with the calls to halt settlements, Obama's active courting of Iran and pressure on Israel to make progress with the Palestinians have only compounded Israeli fears.

Israelis will be anxiously watching Obama's June 4 speech in Cairo, where he will deliver a message to the Muslim world to try to repair relations that frayed badly under the Bush administration.

Obama will also visit Saudi Arabia before he goes to Egypt. But he has no plans to stop in Israel, an hour's flight from Egypt, during his swing through the region.

The U.S. and many other Western countries have been dealing with Abbas, who leads the Palestinian Authority from the West Bank, while mostly shunning the militant Islamic Hamas group that controls the Gaza Strip.

Hamas took over Gaza nearly two years ago after routing Abbas' forces in bloody street battles. Repeated attempts to reconcile between the two bitter rivals have failed to yield any results.

A senior Hamas militant was

killed Thursday by Israeli forces in the West Bank city of Hebron after a 14-year manhunt.

The Israeli military said they surrounded Abed Majid Daodin's house and called on him to surrender, but he instead opened fire, and they shot and killed him. The military said he had

recruited and dispatched suicide bombers, including two who killed 10 Israelis and wounded more than 100 in 1995.

Hamas vowed to avenge the militant's death. "Our fighters in the West Bank have full freedom to strike any target," the group said. □



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# Explosion in mosque kills 15 in Iranian border town



**NASSER KARIMI**  
Associated Press Writer

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — An explosion in a mosque killed 15 people near Iran's volatile border with Pakistan and Afghanistan on Thursday and a local official said it was a terrorist attack.

The blast went off in Zahedan, the capital of a lawless

province in southeast Iran that frequently witnesses clashes between police and gangs involved in drug smuggling. It has also seen attacks by an Islamic militant group called Jundallah, which claims to be fighting for rights of Sunni Muslims in mainly Shiite Iran but is suspected of al-Qaida links.

Alaeddin Mazari, a local journalist in Zahedan, told The Associated Press that the explosion occurred in the second biggest Shiite Muslim mosque in the city, some 1,000 miles southeast of the capital, Tehran.

Ali Mohammad Azad, the governor of Sistan-Baluchestan province where Zahedan is the

capital, told the official Islamic Republic News Agency the explosion happened at 7:45 p.m. and said a terrorist was involved, but didn't provide further details. He told state television that he detained some suspects who planned additional attacks ahead of the June 12 presidential election. In 2007, Jundallah, or God's Brigade, killed 11 members of the country's elite Revolutionary Guards in Zahedan.

The state news agency said 80 people were injured in Thursday's explosion and no group had taken responsibility. It quoted an unidentified official as saying part of the mosque was destroyed and rescue teams were transferring the injured and the bodies of the dead.

The attack occurred less than a week after the presidents of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan met in Tehran and reaffirmed their commitment to work together to fight terrorism and drug trafficking in the region. Sectarian violence has been

rare in Iran outside the southeast, but not totally absent.

Iran hanged three men last month for their involvement in a bombing inside a packed Shiite mosque in April 2008 that killed 14 people in the southwest city of Shiraz, about 550 miles south of Tehran.

The blast went off as the mosque's cleric was delivering a weekly speech denouncing the Bahai faith and Wahabiism — an austere brand of Sunni Islam practiced mostly in Saudi Arabia, according to local news reports. Such speeches are not unusual in Iranian mosques.

Iran's Revolutionary Court said the three were members of the Iran Royal Association, a little known monarchist group that wants to overthrow the country's ruling Islamic establishment. It said they had ties to the U.S.

Tehran has repeatedly accused the U.S. and Britain of backing militants and opposition groups. Both countries deny it.

## Brazil dam break kills 4, leaves 11 people missing

**TALES AZZONI**  
Associated Press Writer

SAO PAULO (AP) — Raging torrents from a ruptured dam swamped a small rural Brazilian city Thursday, killing four people and destroying at least 120 homes in a region already devastated by more than a month of floods. Eleven people were missing, 80 suffered minor injuries and nearly 3,000 were forced from their homes.

Amateur video footage showed water inundating Cocal, population about 25,000, after a section of the dam gave way under the weight of a reservoir bloated by rains.

Floods from those rains have killed nearly 60 and left hundreds of thousands homeless in a wide swath of northern Brazil.

"It was like a tsunami," Gov. Wellington Dias of northeastern Piaui state said after touring the devastation zone.

Some residents climbed trees and scrambled atop rooftops after the floodwaters suddenly swelled a river.

"What I saw was frightening. It was a wall of water 20 meters (65 feet) high, equivalent to a three-story building," Dias said, according to a Web site operated by SBT television.

Authorities began evacuating families about two hours after the dam failed, but civil defense authorities said Thursday night that 11 people were still missing and that rescue operations had been suspended until

Friday. Churches and other buildings were turned into shelters for the 2,953 people who were displaced.

The dead from the dam rupture included girls ages 10 and 12, a 72-year-old man and a 73-year-old woman, the state government said on its Web site.

Downpours have battered northern and northeastern Brazil since April, causing floods and mudslides in a region extending from the Amazon rain forest to the Atlantic Ocean. Authorities say 59 people have been killed and more than 423,000 were displaced. Heavy rains in recent days swelled the reservoir behind the dam, increasing pressure that opened a 165-foot (50-meter) tear and eventually led to the rupture, the Piaui state government said in a



Residents ride on a truck along a flooded street in Itapecuru Mirim, in the northeast state of Maranhao, Brazil Thursday, May 7, 2009. Floods have killed at least 32 and left nearly 200,000 homeless across a vast region stretching from the Amazon jungle to the northeastern Atlantic coast as meteorologists predict the bad weather could last for weeks.

Associated Press

statement.

"It was a lot of water," resident Antonio Antonino told SBT. "People were desperate, they were crying. I'm 60 years old, and I've never seen anything like this."

The floods also swept away crops and livestock, according to the government statement.

Officials launched an overnight rescue operation using five helicopters to transport victims to safety,

and firefighters were sent to aid the victims.

Piaui Civil Defense spokeswoman Vanize Lemos said at least 150 families were initially rescued.

The heavy rains are blamed on an Atlantic Ocean weather system that normally moves away in April but hasn't budged this year. Meanwhile, southern Brazil has been hit by a drought that has severely affected agriculture.

# Several policemen beaten by opposition in Georgia

DAVID NOWAK

Associated Press Writer

TBILISI, Georgia (AP) — Protesters demanding Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili's resignation beat several police officers and stabbed one with a knife, officials said.

Thursday's incident raised new fears that mostly peaceful protests could slide into widespread violence, further destabilizing the strategically-placed ex-Soviet nation which sits astride a key oil pipeline carrying Caspian crude to Western markets.

Shortly after police officers were beaten by protesters, about 20 club-wielding men waded into the crowd of opposition demonstrators outside the parliament building, injuring several protesters. Opposition leader Nino Burdzhianadze said the assailants were plainclothes police agents.

Crowds of opposition demonstrators have held daily rallies in the Georgian capital since April 9, demanding that the U.S.-allied Saakashvili step down. They hold the president responsible for Georgia's crushing defeat in



Police officers behind glass watch opposition supporters protesting outside City Hall in Tbilisi, Georgia, Thursday, May 28, 2009. Hundreds of demonstrators marched through the center of Georgia's capital and rallied outside City Hall Thursday in their latest protest aimed at unseating President Mikhail Saakashvili.

Associated Press

last year's war with Russia and accuse him of authoritarian tendencies.

Hundreds of demonstrators marched through the center of Georgia's capital and rallied outside City Hall Thursday before converging on the parliament building.

Saakashvili has rejected calls for early elections, saying he will fully serve his term which ends in 2013. He has dismissed

claims of choking dissent, pointing to the fact that his critics have been given free rein to hold demonstrations when and where they see fit. Before Thursday, police had not intervened in the protests, which have ranged from rallies in front of the parliament building to disrupting rail traffic earlier this week. Giorgi Ugulava, Tbilisi's president-allied mayor, told The

Associated Press in a recent interview that he believes demonstrators are breaking the law, but authorities want to avoid clashes.

Political analysts say that any use of force against protesters would dramatically swell the number of opposition supporters.

Thursday's beating of police officers reflected tensions growing as many opposition

supporters felt increasingly angry and exasperated after more than six weeks of daily rallies which have failed to weaken Saakashvili's grip on power.

In Thursday's incident, demonstrators who gathered outside the parliament building beat a plainclothes police officer who followed their actions, Georgian Interior Ministry spokesman Shota Utashvili said. The officer called for help, but protesters also beat three other policemen who arrived at the scene and stabbed one of them with a knife, Utashvili said. He said the wounded officer was hospitalized in stable condition, and a criminal investigation was launched.

The clashes Thursday were the first significant outbreak of violence since May 6, when several dozen people were injured in a clash between police and protesters outside a police station.

Patriarch Ilia II, a universally respected spiritual leader, weighed into the political fray Thursday with a church statement calling for measures to be taken to diffuse the situation, "be it early elections, negotiations, or something else."

Opposition leaders enthusiastically greeted the mention of early elections, the first time the church has said that.

Global attention has been fixed upon the South Caucasus nation which has been the subject of a tug-of-war for political influence between its former Soviet master, Russia, and the West.

While many Georgians disapprove of Saakashvili's handling of the war and what they see as his authoritarian trends, most back Saakashvili's goal of joining NATO and the European Union.

Speaking on a visit to Rome on Thursday, Saakashvili reminded Europe of his nation's hopes for closer ties. "We are on our way at a time when Europe is so much busy with its own problems," he said at a news conference. "It's so hard to hear our knock on the door, there is internal noise going on there."

## 34 insurgents killed in eastern Afghanistan

FISNIK ABRASHI

Associated Press Writer

KABUL (AP) — U.S.-led coalition troops attacked a suspected training camp for foreign fighters in eastern Afghanistan, and an Afghan official said 34 militants were killed, including 22 Arabs and Pakistanis. Among the dead were six who blew up their suicide vests during the battle, the U.S. coalition said.

The raid Thursday on the heavily guarded compound in Paktika province — which lies on Afghanistan's porous border with Pakistan — serves as a reminder that the rugged region remains a breeding ground for Islamist fighters waging insurgencies in both countries.

The administration of President Barack

Obama has declared eliminating militant havens as a priority in defeating al-Qaida and winning the war in Afghanistan. Insurgents use such areas as a base for operations, from which U.S. military officials say they launch attacks on Western troops.

At least six insurgents wearing suicide vests blew themselves up during the battle, and one coalition member was wounded in the assault, the U.S. military said in a statement.

Afghan authorities said they recovered 34 bodies, including 22 Arabs and Pakistanis, said Hamidullah Zuhak, a spokesman for Paktika's governor. They found personal documents on the bodies of those killed, he said.

Coalition troops were hunting for a rebel

commander named Sangeen, but it was unclear if he was among those killed in the raid on the compound in Wazir Akbar Khan district, the U.S. military said.

The military alleges Sangeen plans and coordinates the movement of al-Qaida senior leaders and that of hundreds of foreign fighters from Pakistan to Afghanistan, the coalition statement said. Dozens of militants tried to repel the pre-dawn attack on the heavily fortified positions, some using high ground to fire on the forces and forcing them to call in airstrikes, the coalition said.

Forces also uncovered a weapons cache containing rocket-propelled grenade launchers, AK-47 assault rifles, suicide vests and other armaments, the military said. □

# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

NHL Playoffs

# Helm's OT goal puts Red Wings back in Cup finals

LARRY LAGE

AP Sports Writer

DETROIT (AP) — Darren Helm scored 3:58 into overtime to give the Detroit Red Wings a 2-1 win over the Chicago Blackhawks in Wednesday's Western Conference finals to set up an NHL Stanley Cup finals rematch with Pittsburgh.

Detroit won the Western Conference finals 4-1.

The Red Wings and Penguins, coming off a four-game sweep over Carolina in the East, will open the championship series Saturday night in Detroit.

Detroit's Dan Cleary opened the scoring 6:08 into the third period, and Chicago's Patrick Kane tied it with 7:07 left in regulation with his first goal of the series.

Cristobal Huet, playing for the injured Nikolai Khabibulin, made 44 saves



**Detroit Red Wings players celebrate with teammate Darren Helm, who scored against Chicago Blackhawks goalie Cristobal Huet, in overtime of Game 5 of the NHL hockey Western Conference finals in Detroit, Wednesday, May 27, 2009. Detroit won the game 2-1 and the series 4-1.**

Associated Press

for the Blackhawks. He forced overtime with a spectacular stop from his stomach, lifting his right leg to knock away Johan Franzen's shot in the closing seconds.

Detroit's Chris Osgood stopped 30 shots.

The Red Wings are matching up with Pittsburgh in what is the NHL's first Stanley Cup rematch since the Edmonton Oilers beat the New York Islanders in 1984 after losing to them the previous year.

The Red Wings, the first defending champion to get back to the finals since New Jersey in 2001, are trying to become the first team to repeat since winning the Cup in 1997 and '98.

In the Western Conference finale, both teams were missing key players.

Continued on Page B12

## NL Roundup

# Randy Johnson wins No. 299, Giants top Braves 6-3

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Randy Johnson earned his 299th victory with six impressive innings, yielding three hits and one run in San Francisco's 6-3 win over Atlanta on Wednesday.

Johnson (4-4) retired the first nine hitters and 15 of the first 16 in a performance reminiscent of the Big Unit in his prime, although the 45-year-old left-hander has less power and more precision these days. The five-time Cy Young Award winner struck out five to run his career total to 4,843, second-most in baseball history. He didn't walk a batter and allowed his only run on Casey Kotchman's RBI single in the sixth.

Johnson likely will get his first chance to become the 24th major leaguer with 300 victories next Wednesday at Washington.

Aaron Rowand had two doubles and stole home for the Giants. Kenshin Kawakami (3-6) allowed nine hits and four walks in 5 2-3 innings in his sixth defeat in eight starts. At Chicago, Carlos Zambrano went wild in a ball-tossing, bat-swinging tirade after being ejected and was gone when Reed Johnson's tiebreaking home run in the eighth inning sent Chicago over Pittsburgh.

The Cubs ace was tossed by umpire Mark Carlson in the seventh after Nyjer Morgan

scored the tying run on a wild pitch, beating catcher Geovany Soto's throw to Zambrano at the plate.

Zambrano jumped up, argued the call and appeared to nudge Carlson. The pitcher then pointed in Carlson's face and gave him the ejection sign. Zambrano then threw a ball into left field, slammed his glove against a fence and grabbed a bat to whack a drink dispenser on his way into the clubhouse.

At Milwaukee, Nick Stavinoha had two RBIs and scored the go-ahead run, leading St. Louis to the win.

Cardinals starter Todd Wellemeyer (5-4) and the bullpen showcased the best



**San Francisco Giants' Randy Johnson throws against the Atlanta Braves during the first inning of a baseball game Wednesday, May 27, 2009, in San Francisco.**

Associated Press

team ERA in the majors (3.58) by silencing struggling Milwaukee, which struck out 27 times in the three-game series.

**In other NL games it was:**  
St. Louis 3, Milwaukee

2; Chicago Cubs 5, Pittsburgh 2; L.A. Dodgers 8, Colorado 6; Florida 6, Philadelphia 2; Cincinnati 6, Houston 1; N.Y. Mets 7, Washington 4; San Diego 8, Arizona 5; San Francisco 6, Atlanta 3. □

# Eury Jr. out as crew chief for slumping Earnhardt

JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (AP) — Dale Earnhardt Jr. will have a new crew chief starting with this weekend's race at Dover because of a slump that has dragged deep into the season. Tony Eury Jr. was removed as crew chief of Earnhardt's No. 88 team Thursday. The two are cousins and have worked together during Earnhardt's entire career.

"It seemed the harder we pushed, the more it unraveled," team owner Rick Hendrick told The Associated Press. "We need a new reason to get up and go to the track each morning, and the chemistry had broken down between them to the point where we just needed a fresh start."

The pair left Dale Earnhardt Inc. last season to drive for

Hendrick Motorsports. But despite driving for NASCAR's top team they have one win in 48 races with Hendrick and are 19th in points. They hit rock bottom with Monday's 40th-place finish at Lowe's Motor Speedway.

Team manager Brian Whitesell will be the crew chief this weekend. Lance McGrew will take over in two weeks on an interim basis as Hendrick decides on a long-term plan for NASCAR's most popular driver.

After Monday's rain-shortened race, Hendrick's commitment to the pair had clearly waned following months of steadfast support. "I kept waiting for the break, kept waiting for something positive to happen," Hendrick said. "Monday sure didn't help.

I was talking to our guys and

I just said, 'It's time, we've just got to do it.'"

Earnhardt and Eury spent Tuesday and Wednesday testing on the road course at Virginia International Raceway. Hendrick told them he was splitting the two when they returned Wednesday evening. He said they needed time to adjust to the split.

"I don't know that they were 100 percent, but by this morning, both of them said they were good," Hendrick said. "I don't think they felt good when I told them, but I think they'll feel better as the days go on."

Eury will stay with Hendrick Motorsports in a research and development role. Whatever route Hendrick takes with Earnhardt, he's giving Earnhardt the full-time use of Whitesell and Rex Stump, the lead chassis engineer. □



Dale Earnhardt Jr., left, talks to a crew member during practice for Sunday's NASCAR Coca-Cola 600 auto race at Lowe's Motor Speedway in Concord, N.C., Thursday, May 21, 2009.

*Associated Press*

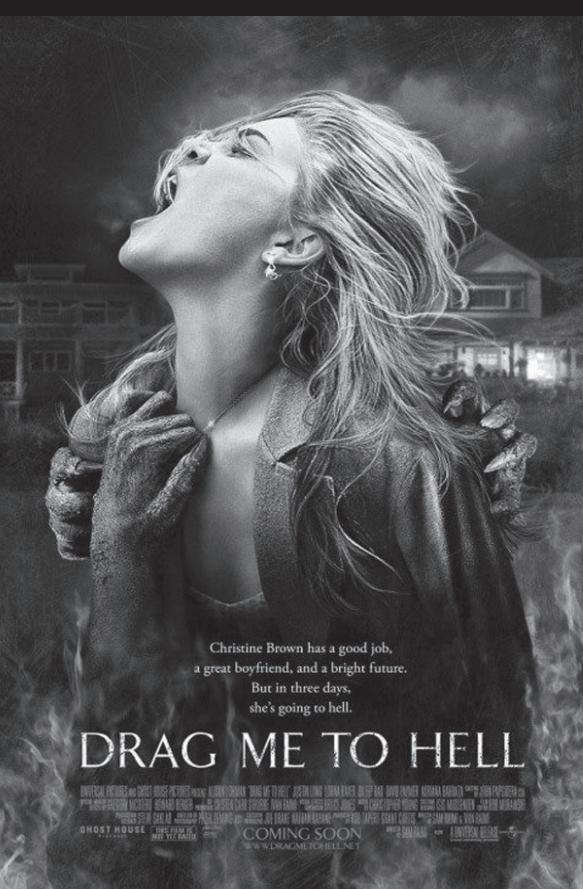
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\*matinee: saturday & sunday | late show: friday and saturday

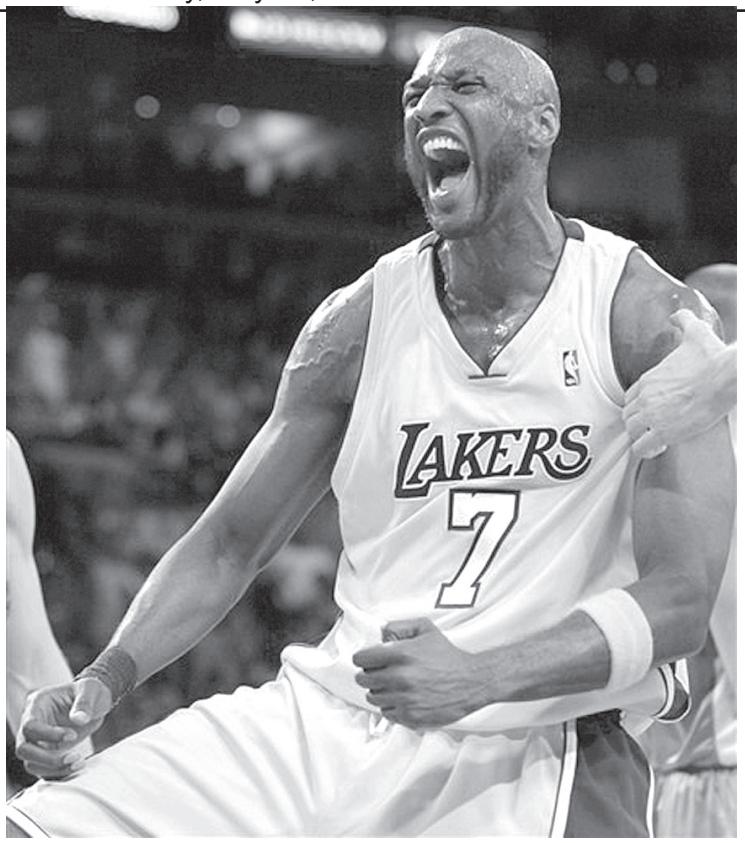
### AT RENAISSANCE - ORANJESTAD

PG-13	<b>DRAG ME TO HELL</b>	daily: matinee: 1:15	5:35 3:25	7:45 late show:	9:50 12:00	NEW
R	<b>THE LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT</b>	daily: matinee: 12:55	5:25 3:10	8:00 late show:	10:10 12:20	NEW
PG-13	<b>OBSESSED</b>	daily: matinee:	7:30	9:45 late show:	12:00	
PG-13	<b>STAR TREK XI</b>	daily: matinee: 12:30	6:05 3:15	8:45 late show:	11:30	
PG-13	<b>ANGELS &amp; DEMONS</b>	daily: matinee: 12:05	5:40 2:50	8:30 late show:	11:20	
PG	<b>NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2</b>	daily: matinee: 1:30	6:00 3:45	8:15 late show:	10:25 12:30	
PG	<b>MONSTERS VS ALIENS</b>	daily: matinee: 1:10	5:25 3:20	late show:		

### AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG-13	<b>DRAG ME TO HELL</b>	daily: matinee: 1:30	5:50 3:40	8:00 late show:	10:10 12:10	NEW
R	<b>THE LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT</b>	daily: matinee:	7:40	9:50 late show:	12:00	NEW
PG-13	<b>ANGLES &amp; DEMONS</b>	daily: matinee: 11:55	5:30 2:40	8:15 late show:	11:10	
PG-13	<b>STAR TREK XI</b>	daily: matinee: 12:50	3:30	late show:		
PG-13	<b>GHOSTS OF GIRLFRIENDS PAST</b>	daily: matinee:	6:00	8:30 late show:	11:00	
PG	<b>NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2</b>	daily: matinee: 2:15	4:30	6:45 late show:	9:00 11:25	
PG	<b>MONSTERS VS ALIENS</b>	daily: matinee: 1:25	5:40 3:35	late show:		
PG-13	<b>17 AGAIN</b>	daily: matinee:	4:20 2:05	6:30 late show:	8:45 11:05	





Los Angeles Lakers forward Lamar Odom reacts to making a shot during the second half against the Denver Nuggets in Game 5 in the NBA Western Conference basketball finals Wednesday, May 27, 2009, in Los Angeles.

*Associated Press*

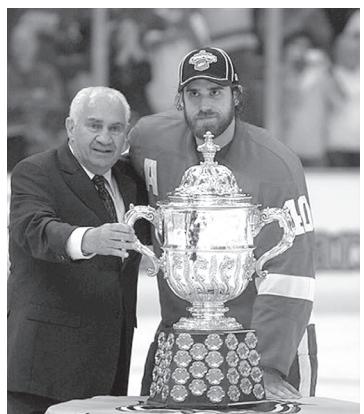
#### BETH HARRIS AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kobe Bryant scored 22 points as the Los Angeles Lakers dominated the fourth quarter to take a 103-94 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Wednesday for a 3-2 lead in the NBA Western Conference finals.

Lamar Odom had 19 points and 14 rebounds, and Pau Gasol added 14 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers.

Game 6 is Friday in Denver, where the Lakers lost Game 4 by 19 points.

"Got to come ready to play,"



National Hockey League senior vice president of hockey operations Jim Gregory, left, and Detroit Red Wings center Henrik Zetterberg (40), of Sweden, stand with the Clarence S. Campbell Bowl after the Red Wings defeated the Chicago Blackhawks in Game 5 of the Western Conference hockey finals in Detroit, Wednesday, May 27, 2009.

*Associated Press*

Bryant said. "We made a lot of mistakes the last time, the mistakes that took place were execution, and we didn't do things at the defensive end. "We'll come ready to play." Carmelo Anthony scored 31 points, hitting 12 of 13 free throws, and Kenyon Martin and Chauncey Billups added 12 points each for the Nuggets.

The teams were tied after the first, second and third quarters for just the fourth time in NBA playoff history.

So it all came down to the final 12 minutes.

Bryant, Odom and Gasol

#### NHL PLAYOFFS

*Continued from Page B10*

Detroit was without six-time Norris Trophy-winning defenseman Nicklas Lidstrom; his replacement, Jonathan Ericsson; MVP finalist Pavel Datsyuk; and four-time Cup-winning forward Kris Draper. In addition to Khabibulin, Chicago faced elimination without star forward Martin Havlat.

The Red Wings looked motivated to get off to a good start.

Detroit had 21 shots in the first period, the most it has had in any period this season, and two power plays but started the second in a scoreless tie.

Chicago failed to take advantage of having an extra skater three times in the second period, but it did outshoot the Red Wings 11-10.

The Blackhawks, playing in their first conference final since losing to Detroit in 1995, showed plenty of resolve after Cleary scored in the third period.

Kane scored on his first shot of the game, recording a goal for the first time in the series after scoring eight times in the first two rounds. □

NBA playoffs

# Lakers, beat Nuggets 103-94 in Game 5

teamed for all but seven of the Lakers' points in the fourth. They opened on an 11-0 run for their first lead of the second half and it was capped by Shannon Brown's jumper that beat the shot clock.

The Nuggets used a 13-6 run to close to 93-89. Linas Kleiza scored seven straight and Anthony had six in the spurt. But then the Lakers regained control and finished off the victory. They improved to 20-0 in Game 5s at home when a series is tied 2-2.

Bryant said he changed his role from the what it had been in the series.

"It was a big gamble for me coming in, but I wanted to change my approach this game and be more of a decoy," he said after adding eight assists, several out of double-teams in the fourth quarter. "The past couple games they really were loading to my side and I figured I could be a decoy and try to give chances to my teammates."

Anthony hit a jumper to get Denver to 96-91 with 1:24 remaining. But the Nuggets went cold from the field over the final 3:38, while the Lakers capitalized at the line. Los

Angeles outscored Denver 10-5 in that span, including going 6 of 8 from the line.

Denver returns home needing a victory to send the series back to Los Angeles for a Game 7 on Sunday. The Nuggets have

never won a best-of-7 series after losing Game 1.

The Lakers haven't lost a best-of-7 series that was tied 2-2 after winning Game 5 since the 1969 NBA finals against Boston. □

*AL Roundup*

## Orioles overcome Blue Jays 12-10 in 11

BALTIMORE (AP) — The Baltimore Orioles came back twice to beat Toronto 12-10 in 11 innings and extend the Blue Jays' losing streak to nine games in the American League on Wednesday.

Baltimore trailed 8-3 when Toronto ace Roy Halladay left after seven innings, and 10-8 after Aaron Hill hit a two-run homer off Danys Baez in the top of the 11th.

But after Luke Scott hit an RBI single off Brian Wolfe (1-1) that put runners at the corners with one out, Nolan Reimold hit a winning three-run homer, his fourth in 13 games since being recalled from Triple-A Norfolk.

Toronto finished the worst road swing in franchise history — three losses apiece in Boston, Atlanta and Baltimore. The Blue Jays never before went winless on a road trip of at least nine games.

#### Tigers 8, Royals 3

At Kansas City, Missouri, rookie Rick Porcello won his fifth straight start, and Placido Polanco homered and drove in three runs for Detroit, which took two of three from Kansas City and increased its lead over the Royals in the AL Central to four games.

The Royals, after a promising April and early May, have lost 13 of 18.

Porcello (6-3) allowed two runs and four hits in six innings. Miguel Cabrera homered and Josh Anderson, the Tigers' leadoff hitter, had four hits. Kyle Davies (2-4) took the loss.

#### Mariners 6, Athletics 1

At Oakland, California, Russell Branyan hit a go-ahead two-run homer in the sixth inning, Erik Bedard won for the first time in five starts, and Seattle avoided a sweep.

Oakland's Bobby Crosby snapped a career-long 72-game, 243 at-bat homerless streak with a drive in the second that tied it at 1, but Oakland could do little else against Bedard (3-2), who allowed five hits, walked two and struck out five in 6 2-3 innings.

At Minneapolis, Daisuke Matsuzaka and the rest of Boston's pitchers tied a modern-day record with six wild pitches while Kevin Slowey was the picture of control in Minnesota's victory over the Red Sox.

Matsuzaka (0-3) tied a franchise record set 80 years ago with four wild pitches, while relievers Manny Delcarmen and Justin Masterson also sent catcher George Kottaras scrambling.

In other AL games, it was Baltimore 12, Toronto 10 innings; Detroit 8, Kansas City 3; Seattle 6, Oakland 1; Cleveland 12, Tampa Bay 7; N.Y. Yankees 9, Texas 2; Minnesota 4, Boston 2; and L.A. Angels 3, Chicago White Sox 1. □



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# Sismo de magnitud 7,1 sacude Honduras: al menos 6 muertos

TEGUCIGALPA - Un terremoto con magnitud de 7,1 dejó el jueves por lo menos seis muertos y 40 heridos en la zona caribeña de Honduras.

El sismo se registró a las 02.24 (0824 GMT) y tuvo una profundidad de 10 kilómetros, según el servicio geológico de Estados Unidos. El epicentro se localizó a unos 310 kilómetros al noreste de Tegucigalpa y a unos 130 kilómetros al noreste de La Ceiba.

Un comunicado de la Comisión Permanente de Contingencias (Copeco) indicó que hay 122 casas afectadas, 57 destruidas y 65 dañadas. Además 14 escuelas estatales resultaron dañadas, al igual que tres puentes en diferentes localidades hondureñas.

“Se sintió bastante y se lo veía, el agua de la piscina se salía”, dijo Alfredo Cedeño, del Gran Hotel París en La Ceiba.

El jefe nacional de la Copeco, Marcos Burgos, aseguró a la AP que “ya son seis las víctimas mortales reportadas a causa del sismo... y los daños más importantes se registraron en el valle de Sula”, considerada la zona de mayor desarrollo del país, con más de 1,5 millón de habitantes.

Dijo que en la ciudad de San Pedro Sula, a unos 200 kilómetros al norte de la capital, hubo muchos edificios públicos que resultaron con grietas en sus paredes. “Aún es prematuro evaluar los daños, pero fue un evento muy grande el que nos sacudió”.

Los informes oficiales indican que las seis personas muertas, entre ellas un menor de 3 años, fallecieron en diferentes partes de la región norte del país debido a los derrumbes de viviendas.

Desde Washington el secretario general de la OEA, José Miguel Insulza, dijo que los cancilleres de la OEA se reunirán de todas maneras en San Pedro Sula, Honduras, a partir de este fin de semana, pese a daños en estructuras de edificios ocasionados por el terremoto.

Los cancilleres tienen previsto



inaugurar su asamblea anual regular el domingo y realizar sesiones plenarias el lunes y martes. El tema central del debate será la anulación de una resolución que suspendió a Cuba como miembro de la OEA en 1962.

El comandante nacional de bomberos, coronel Carlos Cordero, informó que “en las playas de Tela se observan una gran grieta de hasta seis pies de profundidad por dos de ancho”, subrayó. “Este tipo de agrietamiento en la arena creemos que lo provocó el choque de las placas terrestres”.

Informó que La democracia, uno de los puentes que une

San Pedro Sula con el resto del país “colapsó, su parte central cayó al fondo del río y sus dos cabezales (ambos extremos) están seriamente dañados”. El puente inaugurado en 1963 está sobre el río Ulúa.

Otro puente que está al lado no resultó dañado, dijo al canal 5 de televisión el ministro de Obras Públicas, Rosario Bonano. Agregó que “fue inhabilitado por unas horas, pero ya se abrió al paso de vehículos y personas porque sus daños estructurales son mínimos”.

El ministro de Educación, Marlon Brevé, suspendió temporalmente las clases en las islas de la Bahía y Cortés,

ambas sobre el Atlántico, a causa del sismo.

“Salí corriendo del edificio y pasé por una cuadra antes de voltear a ver y es cuando se calmó el temblor”, relató Raúl González, un recepcionista de un hotel de San Pedro Sula. “Nunca he sentido algo así”, señaló.

Ardulio López, auditor nocturno del hotel Fantasy Island de Roatán, el principal de la isla, dijo a AP: “todo está bien, no hay daños materiales graves ni muertos... no hay nada que lamentar”.

En Guatemala la Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducción de Desastres (Conred) informó que en la aldea Media Luna,

15 viviendas sufrieron daños leves. En tanto que en la Aldea Quetzalito otras 14 casas cayeron. Ambas localidades están ubicadas en Puerto Barrios, cercano a la frontera con Honduras.

En Belice, las personas salieron corriendo de sus casas cuando se desplomaban las ventanas. Al menos cinco casas de madera colapsaron en tres pueblos y una torre de agua se vino abajo en el pueblo de Independence, según autoridades locales.

El jefe de la Defensa Civil de la región caribeña norte de Nicaragua, Freddy Herrera, dijo que por el momento no hay informes de víctimas o daños.

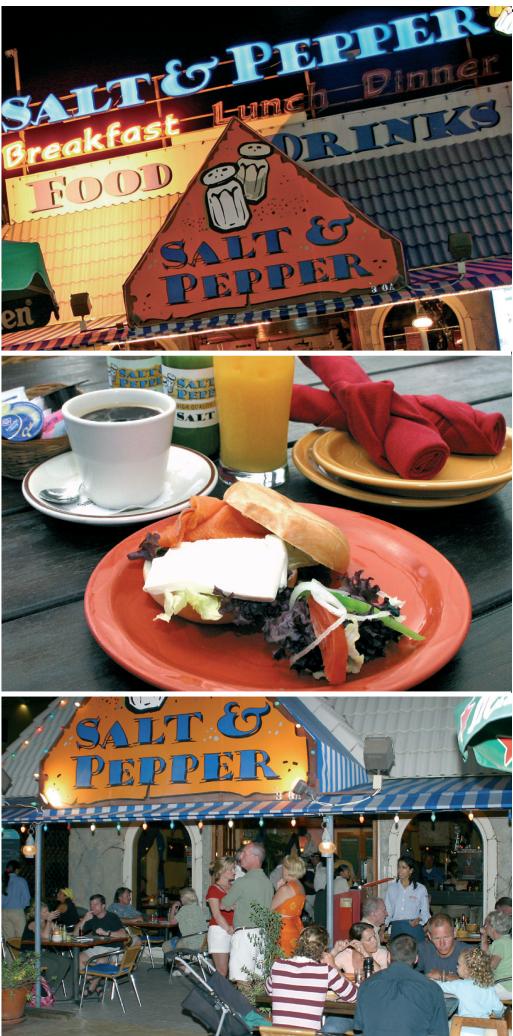
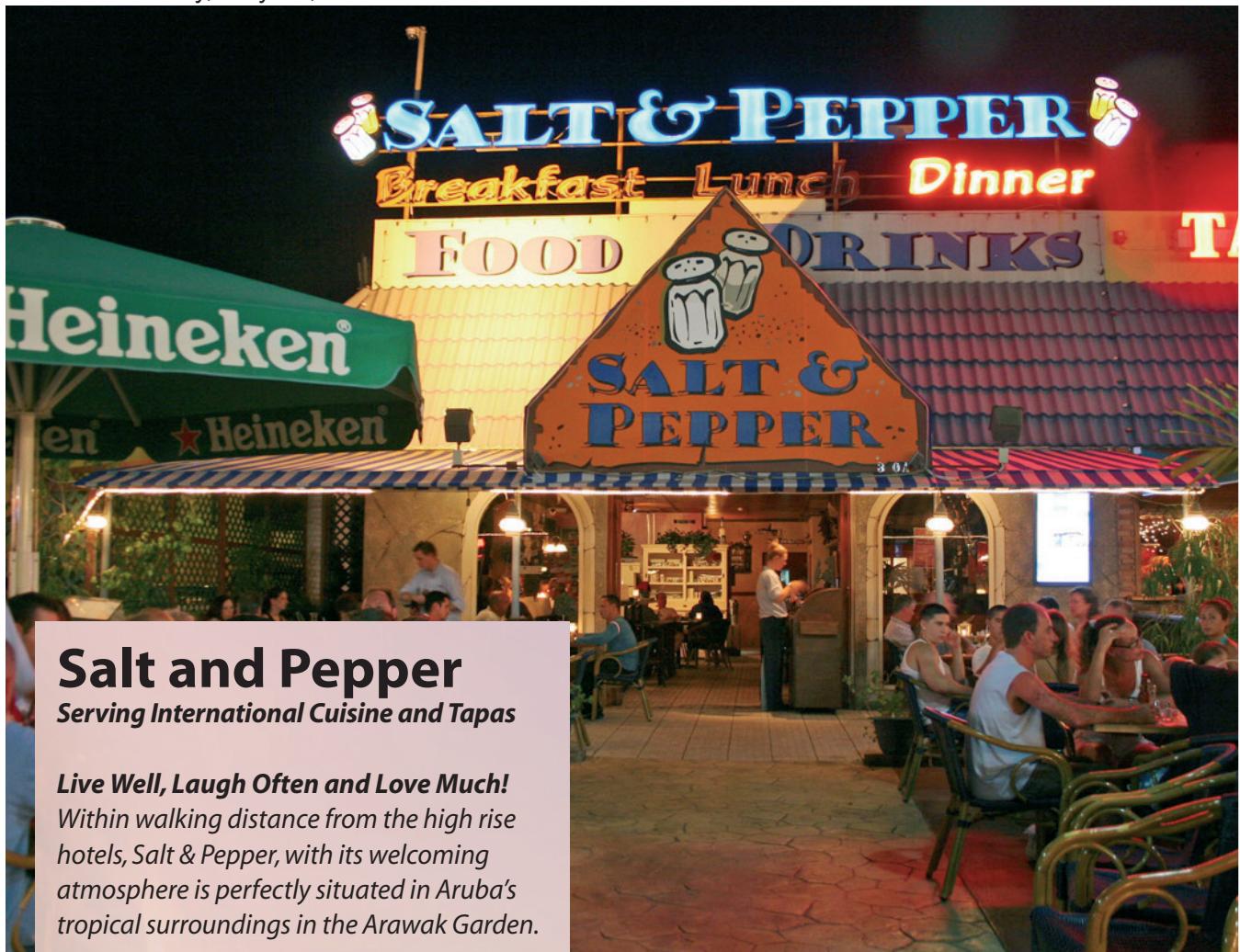
“No tenemos información por el momento, debido a la remota de la zona, dijo a la AP telefónicamente. □

## Venezuela registra primer caso de gripe porcina

CARACAS - El primer contagio de gripe porcina en Venezuela fue confirmado el jueves en un joven que viajó recientemente a Panamá, informó el ministerio de Salud y Protección Social.

“Se trata de un paciente masculino de 22 años de edad, domiciliado en el estado (central de) Miranda, quien viajó en buenas condiciones el día 20 de mayo a Panamá”, dijo el ministerio en un comunicado.

“El paciente refiere haber presentado malestar general leve, horas antes de tomar el avión hacia Venezuela el pasado 25 de mayo de 2009, en el vuelo Copa (Airlines) 221, que llegó a Maiquetía a las 11:40 de la noche de ese día, pero no indicó su malestar en la ficha epidemiológica que le realizó el control sanitario del aeropuerto”, agregó el escrito. □



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